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The Attrition of Change

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Thesis Abstract

Most newly constructed schools begin life as places of hope, enthusiasm, energy, and creativity. In many ways they might be considered 'moving' schools. Such schools strive to anticipate and change with the times. Within a relatively short time, however, a significant number of new schools evolve, indeed regress, into conventional schools. This loss of initial momentum and innovative direction experienced by many newly established schools occurs because of what this study describes as the 'attrition' of change.

This thesis presents an historical case study of a secondary school that was once one of Canada's most renowned, innovative schools in the 1970s, and now 26 years later, can be described as a conventional secondary school. Based on interviews with three cohorts of teachers and administrators who worked in the school in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, the study provides an opportunity for inquiring into and analysing the attrition of educational change.

The evidence of this study of the history of an innovative school points to the existence of an ironic change dynamic, and a dual meaning for the title 'the attrition of change'. There is a natural tendency for the school itself to experience attrition and over time to lose much of its early momentum and innovativeness. This pattern, however, is usually accelerated by hostility from the school's larger professional and parental communities who perceive the school's innovations to be a threat to long held educational beliefs and practices. The staff members of the innovative school feel that their inordinately hard work is unappreciated and misunderstood, turn inward to school colleagues for

protection and support and adopt a less venturesome approach to innovation and change.

In the short term, therefore, the innovative school's influence upon the larger system's attitude towards change tends to be quite negative. In the longer term, however, the innovative school seems to exert significant impact beyond its own walls through the rule-breaking precedents it sets that open up opportunities for others, and through the key leaders it spawns who take their innovative images of schooling to other parts of the system, and initiate change elsewhere. Changes in one part of a system inevitably affect changes in the larger system. Innovative schools, therefore, can erode obstacles to change in the larger system and create a climate of experimentation where one may not have existed previously, thus the second meaning of the 'attrition of change'.

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- to my wife Ramona for her love, encouragement, and assuming responsibility for the daily pressures of life so that I could complete this project.

Dedication

To my parents, my late father Roy, and my mother, Marjorie, for believing that my education was important, and for making it possible.

To my wife Ramona who makes the continuing pursuit of my dreams possible.

Foreword

This is a study of a Canadian school submitted for approval in a British university. As Churchill once remarked with regard to the United States and Great Britain, “we are two nations divided by one language”. This may well apply to Canada and Britain. As far as possible, therefore, I have used British spellings and British terms. Where there might be confusion in terminology for the reader, I have included an explanation. I have, however, left any quotations exactly as published, regardless of source.

In compliance with University regulations, I affirm that this thesis is my own original work and that it has not been published in whole or in part.

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Introduction

I am now enjoying what Handy (1995a) has called the 'Third Age'- the post-career phase of life. Unlike most students who undertake graduate work to advance a career in progress, I can look back on one that has been lengthy and varied. While each year of my 34 years as a public educator brought its challenges and rewards, the three years, 1970 to 1973, as a department head and original staff member of Lord Byron High School remain in my memory as being among the most exciting and influential in my career. As a result, when I began my search for a meaningful topic for a thesis, my mind moved rather quickly to this significant educational experience. This thesis, therefore, is a study of the 25 year history of a new and purposefully innovative school, Lord Byron High School. It opened in 1970, and quickly gained a reputation as one of Canada's most innovative schools. In its first three years of operation, it averaged over 7000 visitors per year, many from outside of Ontario. Gradually, however, the school lost much of its innovative zeal. Lord Byron High School today looks very much like a regular Ontario secondary school. The emphasis on creativity and experimentation in the 1970s has been replaced by a focus on continuity and survival in the 1990s. This pattern raises the question of why did a school, which started out with more advantages than virtually any other secondary school in Ontario and Canada, lose its innovative momentum, and experience an 'attrition of change'. An investigation of this essential question can provide insight into the complex and often paradoxical forces which impact on a school and affect its ability to sustain an innovative culture .

Over my career, I have been associated with a number of new and innovative schools. They all appeared to me to have started out similarly, as places of hope, enthusiasm, energy, and creativity. Within a relatively short time these schools, like Byron, seem to have become rather conventional schools. Just as Huberman (1993), Sikes (1985) and others have described teacher life cycles, there appears to be a life cycle for schools, as there is for other organisations. Kanter (1983), for example, describes some business organisations as experiencing “cultures of age” and others, “cultures of youth” and also some which live with the mistaken belief of “organizational immortality” (p. 349). This organisational literature as well as my own observations led to the following research questions:

- *Is there a ‘life cycle’ to new and innovative schools which contributes to the attrition of change? If such a life cycle exists within such schools, what are its stages and characteristics?*

If there are ‘life cycle’ patterns, then it becomes useful to know what events and forces contributed to shifts in the directions the school took over time. Increasingly, scholars are recognising that schools are extremely complex, and non-linear structures (Wheatley, 1994; Gunter, 1995) which must be looked at through multiple frames (Telford, 1996). To determine the interrelationships and interconnections among events and forces which helped to shape the school, the second research question asks:

- *Are there identifiable danger points and forces, internal and external to the school, which contribute to the attrition of change within it?*

In the 1990s, as reformers search for answers to the perceived inadequacies of contemporary schools, there appears to be a desire to 'just start all over again'. The 'New American Schools' project in the United States (Odden, 1996; Stringfield et al, 1996), and the charter school movement in both Canada and the United States (O'Neil, 1996) are North American examples of this tendency. The closure of failing schools in the United Kingdom, and their replacement by new leadership and staff reflects this hope for new beginnings (Barber, 1996). A related intention for creating 'model' schools or 'new' schools appears to be to use these 'innovative' schools to influence other schools in the larger system to adopt similar reforms (Fullan et al, 1972; Gold and Miles, 1981; Fletcher et al. 1985; Stringfield et al, 1996). The existing evidence, however, suggests that this is a questionable strategy, at least in the short term (Sarason, 1971; Lortie, 1975). Instead of contributing to change, such schools often create animosity and resistance to change in other schools (Gold and Miles, 1981; Hargreaves, 1984; Smith et al, 1987). This paradox suggests a second meaning for the attrition of change. Does an innovative school merely provide an excuse for other schools in the system to resist innovation and change as these studies suggest or, over time, does it exert significant impact beyond its own walls through the rule-breaking precedents it sets that open up opportunities for others? The third research question for this study, therefore, asks:

- *How appropriate is the establishment of an innovative or 'lighthouse' school in promoting change in a school system?*

There is an increasingly rich change literature that analyses the complexities of change (Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves, 1994; Hopkins et al, 1994). Various researchers, for example, have shown the relationship between change and organisational meaning (Sergiovanni,

1992; Fullan, 1993), change and micro-politics (Ball, 1987, Blase, 1988); change and organisational cultures (Nias et al, 1989; Rosenholtz, 1989; Little, 1987; Hargreaves, 1994), change and professional learning (Barth, 1990; Senge, 1990; Lieberman, 1996), change and leadership (Leithwood, 1992, 1994; Block, 1991, 1993; Crump, 1993; Starratt, 1993; Telford, 1996). Similarly there is no shortage of advice to school leaders on change processes (Fullan, 1991; Fullan and Hargreaves, 1991; Hopkins et al, 1994; Stoll and Fink, 1996). In spite of this extensive and varied literature on change, and the accepted principle that lasting change takes a very long time to establish (Louis and Miles, 1990; Fullan, 1991), there are very few in-depth studies of how schools develop and change over time. There are even fewer long term studies of new, innovative schools, especially secondary schools. It is therefore, anticipated that answers to the research questions for this study will contribute to an understanding of why new schools almost invariably start out in a climate of optimism, hope, and innovation, but eventually become rather conventional institutions, like most other schools. Similarly, there are very few long term studies which show the impact of innovative schools on their larger system. This study, therefore, intends to examine this issue. Perhaps more importantly, answers to the research questions will advance our understanding of the change process, particularly as it evolves over long periods of time and provide insight into factors that must be attended to in order to sustain change in any one institution, and extend its influence to others.

To answer these research questions requires an approach to research that captures the historical aspect of the school's evolution but also delves beneath the surface to expose the various levels of meaning that have characterised the school's transition over time.

This suggests a study within the qualitative research paradigm. Edson (1988) captures the essence of a qualitative approach when he states:

We undertake qualitative inquiry not so much from our recognition that we do not know all the answers to our problems but rather from an appreciation of the fact that we do not know all the questions. It is not surprising there is widespread agreement with the truism that the world is full of right answers to bad questions, for not only are hard questions difficult to raise, but it is even harder to question that which is obvious. Qualitative inquiry offers an antidote to this pathology: by making the familiar strange, by turning familiar facts in to puzzles, qualitative inquiry can . . . serve to heighten our critical sensibilities and thereby help us to reformulate our problems in fresh and constructive ways (p. 45).

While the present study begins with fairly definitive questions, the emerging evidence raised issues for me which I had not anticipated. Throughout the work, therefore, I attempt to build areas of inquiry onto the initial research questions. Ironically, Edson's prediction of making the 'familiar strange' also resulted from my explorations. As an 'insider' in Byron's early years I had a privileged research position. From the beginning of this effort, however, I realised how little I had really known. As I probed further, I recognised that as a participant and later observer of the 'Byron scene' I was only aware of a small part of the total picture. Judgements that I had made of people, situations, and events were, of necessity, reassessed and altered as the work progressed. One of Byron's principals, for example, whom I had always held mainly responsible for the 'attrition' of change at Byron, eloquently described the situation from his perspective and made me see the situation 'with new eyes'. As is often the case in this kind of study, the story which

finally resulted was quite different from the one I had intended, and the answers to the research questions quite different from what I had initially anticipated

Moreover, my decision to study Lord Byron High School, and to use a qualitative case study as an appropriate approach to its investigation, led me to something of a 'chicken and egg' dilemma - what to do first? Traditionally, the researcher reviews the appropriate literature to see what has 'gone on before' - to determine how his study "fits with and expands on previous work" (Merriam, 1988). Glaser and Strauss (1967), however, contend that theory must be grounded in practice and reviews of relevant literature must come *after* data collection and preliminary analysis. As Glaser (1978) explains:

In our approach we collect the data in the field first. Then start analysing it and generating theory. When the theory seems sufficiently grounded and developed, *then* we review the literature in the field and relate the theory to it through the integration of ideas Thus scholarship in the same area starts after the emerging theory is sufficiently developed so the theory will not be preconceived by pre-empting concepts (p.32).

Woods (1985) questions this need for "perpetual grounding" (p. 57). He argues that ". . . we are no longer going into institutions 'for the first time' to discover heretofore unsuspected pieces of material detail. The opportunity is there for cumulative/developmental work which will advance theoretical formulation" (p. 57).

While conscious of the nature of this debate, my own approach was more eclectic and interactive. As I proceeded, I continually sought guidance from the methodological literature and particularly from examples of well-respected qualitative studies (Woods, 1979; Ball, 1981; Hargreaves, 1986; Brouillette, 1996). There is, however, little in the literature to guide a retrospective investigation of the kind reported in this study. I was, therefore, compelled to be somewhat inventive, while remaining conscious of the cumulative wisdom of more experienced researchers. In addition, my years of experience, my prior understanding of and indeed contributions to the change literature (Stoll and Fink, 1992;1994;1996; Fink and Stoll, forthcoming), and numerous informal discussions with people who were knowledgeable of Lord Byron and other innovative schools, suggested certain theories of change which resulted in my initial research questions. These questions focused the preliminary research and guided the review of 'school case study' literature. Conversely, this review of other cases opened innumerable avenues for further investigation and shaped the directions the study ultimately took. The results of this rather 'eclectic' and 'interactive' intellectual odyssey are organised into ten chapters.

These chapters are sub-divided into three major sections: Chapters One to Three provide the methodological and conceptual bases for the study. The section which encompasses Chapters Four through Nine describes the empirical aspects of the study, and Chapter Ten pulls together the various strands of the study and presents a summary of the study's findings.

To understand the scope of the issues raised by my questions and to gain insight into possible methodological approaches, I examined the research literature to find case

studies of new and innovative schools. In particular, I sought examples of longitudinal studies of secondary schools. The results of these efforts are described in Chapter One. Based on these previous cases and my reading of the methodological literature, I then developed a methodological strategy which enabled me to capture 25 years of Byron's experience and provide an in-depth analysis of its evolution. This methodological approach is outlined in detail in Chapter Two. Chapter Three describes the conceptual framework used to collect, analyse, and report on the data on Lord Byron. This framework ensures that the school is viewed through multiple lenses and provides the organisational framework and connections for the empirical chapters which follow.

The empirical chapters can be divided into three components: Chapters Four and Five deal with the period 1970 to 1975, the years of 'creativity and experimentation'; Chapters Six and Seven describe and analyse the years of 'overreaching and entropy' from 1975 to 1985, and Chapters Eight and Nine refer to the years of 'survival and continuity', 1985 to 1995. Each of these eras is further divided into an historical and an analytical chapter. Chapters Four, Six and Eight describe the 25 year history of Lord Byron and Chapters Five, Seven and Nine analyse the stages of Byron's evolution using the conceptual themes developed in Chapter Three.

The final chapter, ten, returns to the three research questions as well as the many other issues that developed over the course of the study. For each initial question, the data and analysis advanced over the empirical chapters are summarised. From these summaries the results of the study are detailed and its implications articulated. The investigation now begins with a review of current examples of studies of new and innovative schools.

CHAPTER 1

Cases Studies of New and Innovative Schools

This thesis is an historical case study of change, over time, in one school. It is important, therefore, to review other case studies of individual schools that have experienced longitudinal change in order to “demonstrate how the present study advances, refines or revises what is already known” (Merriam and Simpson, 1984, p. 30). While case study research in education was once a sparsely populated field, it now fills an increasingly important place in the research literature. To determine cases that might be relevant to this study, I established five criteria. First, I decided that school cases should reflect satisfactory standards of case study research. Peshkin (1993) suggests that comprehensive studies of schools should provide rich descriptions of processes, relationships, settings and situations, systems and people within the school. In addition, they should include interpretations of data that suggest new generalisations, develop or elaborate concepts, clarify complexity and develop theories. Some cases will also include verification of assumptions, theories and generalisations, and evaluations of the impact of policies, practices and innovations. The cases outlined in this chapter move beyond description to offer interpretation and in some instances verification and/or evaluation of events, concepts, and theories. This definition, therefore, excludes the many school histories which offer virtually no interpretation or criticism, and studies which are strong on theoretical development but provide little sense of their data (Goodson and Anstead, 1993).

Since this study of Lord Byron High School looks at change over time, I was influenced by the change literature's emphasis on the importance of longevity of an innovation as a demonstration of successful implementation. Fullan (1991) suggests that individual innovations in a school can take two or three years to implement, but institutional changes may take five years or more. Many practices and innovations within schools described in popular educational journals such as Phi Delta Kappan, The Times Educational Supplement, and Educational Leadership, among others, are ephemeral. As Fullan and Miles (1992) contend, too many change efforts suffer from 'superficiality' and 'faddism.' Seldom is there a follow-up to determine what has happened to the innovations. One exception was John Adams High School in Portland Oregon. In the early 1970s, it was the focus of considerable attention (Guernsey, 1970; Schwartz, 1971). It received visitors from many places; its key people spoke at conferences to extol the 'glories' of the school. On July 2, 1981, the school Board in Portland, voted to close the school (Doremus, 1981a) because of its inability to overcome the ultra-liberal almost laissez-faire image it had created in its early years. While few failures to institutionalise change are as dramatic, many other schools that had gained reputations as 'state of the art' in the 1970s had fallen on hard times by the early 1980s (Doremus 1981b; 1981c; 1982). The original stories of these innovative schools focused on the adoption of change, but said very little about the implementation and institutionalisation. Few of the many initiatives publicised in the popular educational journals have been studied, in depth and over time, to determine whether the innovations which began with so much hope and fanfare have, in fact, benefited the school and its pupils in the long term. The second criterion for selecting cases for this review, therefore, was that each study should be long term, which I define as at least five years.

Lord Byron is a case of a secondary school. Therefore, I concluded that the third criterion for inclusion in this review was that the case should deal with a secondary school. This criterion would be important to a study that focuses on change over time because secondary schools have proven particularly impervious to change (Hargreaves, 1994). The persistence of what Sarason (1971) calls the “sacred norms” of secondary education such as departmental structures and streaming of pupils has resulted in secondary schools being particularly resistant to innovation and change. Longitudinal cases of secondary school change would be particularly helpful to understanding the nature and effects of the pervasive structures that constitute the “grammar” of secondary schooling (Tyack and Tobin, 1994). The cases described in this chapter are from the United Kingdom where secondary education begins for pupils at 11 years of age, and in the United States and Canada where secondary education begins at 14 years of age and usually ends at 18 years of age. I have therefore defined secondary education to reflect these different contexts.

Many new schools discussed in the literature (for example, Watts, 1977; Fletcher et al, 1985; Smith et al, 1987) are established by school jurisdictions to experiment with innovative structures, roles, and educational practices. The underlying, often unstated purpose, is to influence change in other schools in the jurisdiction. There is limited evidence to suggest that this strategy works, but it does subject the new and innovative school to intense and often hostile scrutiny from its educational and parent communities. As Hargreaves and his colleagues (1993) have suggested, establishing a new and innovative school is: “considerably different from changing a school from one state to another”(p. 128) and in some ways more complex (Sarason, 1972). Not only must the school attempt to introduce innovations and develop procedures, policies and practices

that other schools take for granted, it must do so in a very open and public way. A fourth criterion, therefore, was to identify new schools. By a new school, I do not necessarily mean a new building, but rather an institution or organisation that is newly created.

A fifth criterion was to include innovative schools. For the purposes of this thesis an innovative school is one in which the staff is prepared to introduce and experiment with educational practices that substantially alter the 'grammar' of schooling (Tyack and Tobin, 1994). Moreover, the school staff attempts to create and experiment with non-traditional school purposes, roles, relationships, structures and culture. I have, however, interpreted 'innovation' rather broadly to reflect different contexts for change. To be innovative in one context may not be considered innovative in another. For example, I have included two studies that describe the transition to comprehensive schools in England (Woods, 1979; Ball, 1981). Comprehensive education has long been part of Ontario's educational organisational structure and not particularly noteworthy as an innovation (Stamp, 1982), but in Britain it continues to be a hotly debated policy issue. The move to comprehensiveness in a British context was, and is, an innovation of considerable significance and public controversy.

My attempt to find cases that met all five criteria was disappointing. I found none. Cases met some criteria and not others. I therefore compromised and decided to include cases that met at least three of the previously described characteristics and would provide insight into my research questions. The following matrix identifies each case by number and indicates the reasons for inclusion in this review:

Figure One

Case/ criteria	Quality case study	Long-term	New	Innovative	Secondary school
1	*	*	*	*	
2		*	*	*	*
3	*		*	*	*
4	*	*	*		*
5	*		*		*
6	*	*	*		
7	*		*		*
8	*		*		*
9		*	*	*	*
10	*		*	*	
11	*	*		*	*
12		*	*	*	*
13	*		*	*	*

The case studies that follow are divided into single school cases and multiple school cases.

Single school cases

While the educational literature has many examples of school histories that tend to be purely descriptive, there are relatively few single school case studies, especially of secondary schools. Each of the cases that follows meets at least three of the identified criteria.

1. The fate of an innovative school

The case that comes closest to meeting my criteria is the study of Kensington School by Smith and colleagues (1987). It is a longitudinal study of a new, innovative school that provides a rich description of the evolution of the school over a period of 20 years, and an in-depth analysis leading to useful theories and generalisations about the life cycle of a new school. It is however, an elementary school, which somewhat limits its applicability to the Lord Byron case. Kensington School, located in Milford School District in the American midwest opened its doors to pupils in 1964. Its creation resulted from a number of factors that coalesced at the same time. An increased pupil population that necessitated the building of a new school occurred at a time when the superintendent of the school district and the district's school Board were prepared to support an experiment in progressive educational approaches. To gain public support for this initiative they encouraged widespread involvement in the design of the building.

It was intended to be a purposefully innovative school. Among its innovations were open space, carpets, pupils organised by divisions not grades, team teaching, democratic decision making among the staff, programmed learning, and widespread use of contemporary technology like television. In short, the school was to be "radically child

centred” and the superintendent intended it to be “a ‘protected sub-culture,’ a temporary system in the district’s over-all change strategy” (Smith et al, 1987, p. 8).

In the first year of the school’s operation, the researchers investigated the pre-planning for the school’s opening and examined the unfolding of these plans. They concluded that the school experienced the ‘liability of newness’. Organisations have

new roles to be learned. The very inventing of the roles and their interdependencies or the maximising of performance have high costs in time, energy, worry, and conflict. The incumbents in the roles are often strangers, hence trust becomes important. Loss of trust has major implications . . . the stable ties connecting the organization to the environment do not exist (p. 50).

The researchers were also able to forecast with considerable accuracy that, over time, Kensington would revert to the ‘old Milford type’ of school. They predicted that a combination of community pressure, changes in central office administration, principal and staff turnover would lead to altered policies at Kensington that would bring it into line with the rest of the district. As early as the second year, with the resignation of the originating principal Mr. Shelby, the predicted scenario began to play itself out as 17 staff members, more than one third of the staff, loyal to the initiating principal also resigned. The researchers remark on the almost ‘cult-like’ following of these teachers for their departing leader. A visionary, and enthusiast for child-centred education, Shelby, according to a staff member, “virtually ‘brainwashed parents’ with the positive aspects of the program” (p. 63). The larger Milford community was not impressed. Since both the first principal and the superintendent who sponsored him were from outside the district,

neither had credibility with other district principals. When both left the district before the end of the decade, their dream of a more humane and progressive form of education for Milford had already faded.

The second principal of Kensington, Mr. Edwards, tempered what many parents and some educators believed to be the extreme choices given to children in the previous era and placated much of the community's discontent. As the authors stated, despite his propensity for more structure in Kensington's programme, he was an innovator in his own right. Though "not in the 'alternative of grandeur style' of his predecessor" (p. 68), his 'invitational' approach to leadership (Stoll and Fink, 1996) built strong loyalties on staff to himself and his child-centred philosophy. Of the 17 teachers he replaced in 1966, 14 were still in the school a decade later. One staff member described him as:

... a very selfless man. He always made you feel that whatever the moment, whatever the time, you were the most important thing right now. Not his wife, and not his family, and not his troubles, but you right at that moment. He was a very perceptive man. He could tell when you weren't feeling well. And even if you thought, boy, you were hiding it really good. He would come into your classroom and say "Why don't you go upstairs and rest. I'll teach this lesson for you" (p. 71).

His first six years as principal are referred to as the 'golden years'. He tightened curriculum and teaching requirements and school procedures, while he maintained the child-centredness of his predecessor. The encouragement of organisational change and the periodic retreats from innovation tended, over time, to correspond to the philosophies

and leadership styles of the four school principals. The importance of leadership for both change and continuity is an on-going theme throughout the school's history. Smith and his colleagues demarcate the eras of the school's history by the principals' tenures.

When the researchers returned to the school in the late 1970s, they found a very different school. The building had gradually been modified, although it was still quite open. More significantly, the pupil population had changed from that of a predominately white middle and working class community to a black, largely inner-city group of children with the concomitant problems of poverty. The black population increased from four per cent in 1973 to 60 per cent in 1980. Weakened by ill health and bewildered by the demographic forces he barely understood, Mr. Edwards' last years saw community and staff unrest. In the midst of this socio-economic transformation, the beloved Mr. Edwards died. The researchers described his era:

. . . Edwards promoted what he saw as the best of the original Kensington identity, made it a little less radical, blended it better with the more conservative district policy and perspective, and . . . made it work in the eyes of everyone - central office, parents, staff, and children . . . (p. 173).

His death was the end of what Smith and his fellow researchers called the "culture of intellectual excitement". This was to be replaced by the "culture of poverty" (pp. 168-169).

After an interim principal, the district and its new, more conservative superintendent appointed a permanent replacement, Mr. Wales. Wales did not see himself as the initiator

of policy but rather as a link in the ‘chain of command.’ As he stated when interviewed, “I’ve always been of the mind that the superintendent sets the tone for a district, and the principal sets the tone for a building and the teachers set the tone in the way it’s going to be run in the classroom” (p. 153). Some of the changes he made were overt - self contained classes, grades, ability grouping, teacher-centred teaching. He tightened discipline. Suspensions increased, as did detentions and paddlings. The sign on the special education room was changed from ‘The Nerve Center’ to ‘Reading Room’ - a subtle but eloquent reminder of the change from child centredness to a traditional structured learning environment. The authors used two well-known quotations to show the shift in philosophies. They characterised the mid 1960s by Robert Browning’s famous line, “A man’s reach should exceed his grasp or what’s a heaven for?” In the late 1970s, they captured the school in the phrase, “what-you-see-is-what-you-get.” Smith and his colleagues (1987) not only describe the events that led to the gradual erosion of the ethos of innovation from the creativity and experimentation in the 1960s to the stability and continuity of the 1970s, but they also suggest a number of factors that have implications for the Byron study.

Implications

Smith and his colleagues conclude that each of the following factors led to what I term the ‘attrition of change’ at Kensington:

- The past as prologue

When Mr. Wales became principal he inherited a staff with a 15 year history. Unlike the group of strangers who were described as experiencing the ‘liability of newness’ in the mid 1960s, when the authors returned in 1978, the staff had developed many practices, policies, traditions, rituals and ceremonies which created the cultural fabric which had sustained the school through difficult times (Schein, 1985). Mr. Wales gained staff support by consolidating these established patterns.

A second part of the past that impacted upon the present was the “reputation developed by the notoriety the school achieved at its outset” (p. 177). Other Milford employees still held grudges 15 years later over Kensington’s perceived ‘favorite son status’:

The point is that reputations linger and affect decisions and actions in organizations long after the bases for those reputations have dissipated. Part of a school’s identity, it seems, is what it once was . . . The past lingers in the present, sometimes making life more difficult for new actors in old settings (p. 177).

In his study of new settings Sarason (1972) describes the negative reaction of employees within the larger system as a predictable phenomenon because other people in other settings will see the new school as a threat to their resources, ideas and values. It would appear that only by looking at such schools over time can one begin to understand their impact on the larger system. The examination of Lord Byron over a 25 year time frame provides this perspective.

- Schools as part of a ‘longitudinal nested system’

Smith and his colleagues (1987), influenced by the contextualist world view of Pepper (1942) and Sarbin (1977), connect Kensington to its context through a model they describe as a longitudinal ‘nested system.’ The school ‘nests’ in a school district which in turn ‘nests’ in a community, a county, a state, a nation and the international community. Each of these contexts has a history that intersects with that of the school and impacts it in important ways. By combining the various contexts with the dimension of historical time, the researchers have developed a way to analyse their data that enables them to “examine increasingly longer periods of time for relevant information in our inquiries” while developing an “holistic view of events”. They contend that “one cannot understand an innovation or change in a system without considering the larger system of which it is a part” (p. 272). For example, national events like the civil rights movement had an effect on the school by changing the racial balance in the school some years after the school’s opening as an almost entirely white, middle class school. This ecological approach (Capra, 1983) highlights the interconnections and interrelationships of a school to its larger community.

The authors’ discussion of ‘nested systems’ is useful for understanding the nature of a school’s context and the impact of that context on the internal events of the school. “It highlights the direct and indirect controls that one system may impose on another” (p. 274). They suggest that because of the complex interrelationships of semi-autonomous units within a ‘nested’ system, examination of the components of such a system requires a long-term perspective. The concept of a ‘nested system’ tends to focus the direction of influence one way - external factors such as state and district policies having impact on the school and therefore the classroom. McLaughlin and Talbert (1993a) also emphasise

the importance of context in the lives of schools. They, however, include internal contexts such as the pupils, professional teacher communities and departments in secondary schools as perhaps more significant in the change process and suggest that influence is two way - the classroom and school also affecting the larger system. It is important, therefore, to understand context as both internal and external to the school. For this reason both the presentation and analysis of the Lord Byron study deal extensively with the external and internal contexts of the school.

- The micropolitics of change

As Smith and his colleagues explain, with reference to Kensington School:

differing interests, conflict, and difficulties in negotiation and conflict resolution ran all through that project. The 'micro-politics' were everywhere. But it was not only 'the fact' of the political nature of the events, but the fact that the individuals did not perceive them as political events, events appropriate to political activities and interactions, that was important (pp. 288-289).

Like most school staffs, the teachers at Kensington paid little attention to the comings and goings of Board members, superintendents and district and state politicians. Ball (1987), from whom Smith and his colleagues borrowed the term 'micro-politics', claims that schools are "arenas for struggle" as teachers, principals superintendents and others, conflict over "vested interests, ideological interests and self interests"(p.19).

Micropolitics is about power and control. It is about individual and group differences.

Micropolitics expresses itself within a school in conflicts about values, resources, school

policies and leadership (Ball, 1987; Blase, 1988; Hargreaves, 1994). Kensington School over the period of the study had four principals, each with a very different educational outlook. At one end of the spectrum was the somewhat avant-garde Shelby and at the other end the more traditional Wales. Teachers accommodated or negotiated with each new regime, or they resigned and moved elsewhere. Newcomers competed with the established teachers. Principals tilted at central office. Teachers and principals interacted with different segments of the community. This micro-political perspective frames the way Smith and his colleagues interpret the events that affected the interplay of change and continuity over the life of the school and helped to shape my own analysis of the role of departments and roles and relationships in the Lord Byron study.

- The centrality of the principalship

One factor that proved crucial to the unfolding of the Kensington story was the very centrality of the principalship. The important role of the principal in initiating, sustaining or blocking change is supported by a substantial international literature (Mortimore et al, 1988; Louis and Miles, 1990; Fullan, 1991; Leithwood, 1992; Busher and Saran, 1994). From the visionary Shelby, through the beloved Edwards, to the affable but rigid Wales, all the Kensington principals both directed and were shaped, in turn, by the course of events. The historian Hook (1955), discriminates between event-making people and eventful people. Event-making people actually shape and direct social forces in preconceived ways. Eventful people are swept along by forces over which they have little control. In a school context, most principals are both; they not only shape social forces but are shaped by them. Shelby tried to shape events to fit his ideology and was overwhelmed by a backlash that forced his rather hasty departure. Edwards' initial

success was followed by difficulties as the school's socio-economic and racial mix changed. He never understood these forces and tended to blame Kensington's loss of innovativeness on these external pressures. After a brief interregnum following Edwards' death, Mr. Wales, with central office support, and indeed direction, avoided controversy by leading Kensington toward an educational stance which was more consistent with the approach of other schools in the Milford district. In the case of each of these three principals, their arrival and departure brought a significant shift in the goals, structures, and culture of Kensington. Each arrival and departure, therefore, tended to mark the beginning or end of an era.

- Controllable and uncontrollable factors

The authors conclude their study by claiming that some causes and antecedents of social and educational events are beyond the ability of individuals or the school's staff to control. Mortimore and his colleagues (1988) make the same point when they discriminate between 'given variables' and 'policy variables'. 'Given variables' are influences, often external to schools which schools cannot change, and often shape events and practices within the school whether the principal and faculty like the changes or not. 'Policy variables' are areas of discretion such as teaching strategies, discipline policies, communication networks, reporting schedules, which are within the school's ability to alter. The authors summarise this aspect of the Kensington story:

Much of the story of the 'fate' of Kensington has been an elaboration of the interrelation of 'innovation', specific planned change, and 'social change,' broader

currents of change in which the Kensington school was metaphorically floating on a turbulent sea of change (p. 290).

The work of Smith and his colleagues (1987) is impressive for its scope, depth of analysis, and insight into the complex interrelations within schools. It has been perhaps the most useful guide for the Byron study. It provides direction for an in-depth longitudinal study; it documents the evolution of a new and innovative school, and it carefully describes the interrelationship of a school with its external context. The study also furnishes a helpful example of historical case study research. The richness of the interviews and documentary data, which included an exhaustive review of 25 years of school board minutes, ensured that their study of the evolution of Kensington school had both depth and breadth. Their description of contextual factors over which the school had no control such as changes of superintendents, media involvement, alterations in state policies, and the demographic changes during the Edwards' years re-emphasised the difficulty of sustaining change over time.

A number of issues and questions remain, however. As researchers who visited the school periodically over time, the authors touch on but do not fully explore the various facets of school culture. Who were the heroes other than Edwards, and why? How did rituals and ceremonies change over time? What sub-cultures existed in the school? How did these sub cultures change over time?

Similarly, leadership is viewed almost exclusively through descriptions of and by the principal. Who were the staff leaders? Who were the community leaders? What changes in leadership occurred within the staff and community over time? How were

decisions made? Lighthall (1973) in his detailed review of an early version of this study (Smith and Keith, 1971) is particularly critical of the failure of the authors to take a moral stand on the leadership style of the first principal Shelby. Lighthall argues that leaders like Shelby impose their will on both staff and community with very little questioning of their style by the authors. Shelby expected a democratic teacher-pupil relationship, but his actions in his dealings with teachers and others suggest that his way, at least on the 'big' things, was the only way. In some ways, Lighthall argues, Shelby was an ideologue who articulated democratic values but brooked little opposition. By criticising the study in this way, Lighthall poses the question of whether the authors agreed with Shelby's articulated values and therefore, made little comment on the discrepancies between his words and actions. This raises the larger question for the reader - is the researcher's stance one of trying to understand, while remaining morally neutral, or if the researcher is the prime instrument of qualitative research as Ball (1993) suggests, does the researcher allow his/ her subjectivity to enter into the equation. I return to this issue in Chapter Two.

While the authors show the political and structural relationships among the school, the district, and the state, their nested systems model provides limited insight into relationships with other schools in the system, the influence of the teachers' unions, and the role of various groups in the community. They were unable to get at the deep layers of meaning within the school and touched only lightly on the changing nature of teachers' work (McLaughlin, 1993) and the impact of changes in the school and district on teachers' lives. When Shelby left the school, 17 teachers also left. This would appear to be an inordinately high number. Yet the reasons for this mass departure are glossed over and ascribed to a 'cult mentality' that suggests that most of the departed teachers

mindlessly supported and followed Shelby who was seen as a ‘deviant newcomer’ by the rest of the system. The only teachers quoted are those who remained who described some of the departed as ‘outsiders’ and ‘weirdoes’. It seems that the authors made no effort to investigate the reasons for the departure from the 17 who left and appear to have accepted the ‘cult’ idea as a satisfactory explanation. This seems rather judgmental when little substantive evidence is provided. As a consequence, in my own work I interviewed a number of staff members who had left Lord Byron in order to provide a more balanced perspective.

One final concern is that most of their data, and therefore interpretations on district issues, are for the most part, drawn from printed documents, and interviews with the superintendents. Experience as an insider in many district activities tells me that district documents such as minutes of school board meetings, reports by officials to the Board, records of community meetings are sanitised and do not reflect the conflict and the passion of internal debates. These can sometimes be balanced by newspaper reports and interviews with school board members and officials other than the superintendent. In a similar vein, Goodson and Anstead (1993) talk about the “hierarchy of credibility” that sometimes gives inordinate weight to people in positions of authority. This would appear to be the case in this study.

These caveats aside, this is a germinal study of a school as it evolves over time. Its depth of historical research through the examination of multiple primary sources such as Board minutes, and retrospective interviews of principals, teachers and parents, when combined with numerous on-site visits, provide an in-depth and holistic picture of the problems faced by a new and innovative school over time.

2. The Countesthorpe experience

The second case of a new and intentionally innovative school is drawn from a compendium of sources that add up to a useful, albeit incomplete case of a well-known innovative school in the United Kingdom. It was a new and innovative secondary school that is described through four different sources which cover the first 15 years of the school's history. Countesthorpe opened in 1970. Stuart Mason, the Director of Education for Leicestershire Local Education Authority (L.E.A.), was considered one of Britain's most experienced and progressive directors (Fletcher et al, 1985). He felt strongly that schools should prepare pupils for a rapidly changing world and that schools, therefore, required dramatic restructuring. He wanted to show how the traditional British secondary-modern school and grammar school "instead of driving in pairs would now drive in tandem" (Fletcher et al, 1985, p. 54) by creating a new 'upper school' with pupils' entry at 14 as opposed to the usual 11 years of age. His opportunity came when significant pupil growth in the area near the city of Leicester required the construction of a new school. This new building was designed to encourage curriculum integration and staff co-operation. Bernbaum (1973) provides a description and interpretation of the school after its first six months of operation, and Watts (1977) and a number of colleagues add their perspectives on the school after five years of operation. Evans (1983), a member of the Countesthorpe staff, contributes an insider's view 10 years after Bernbaum's initial study. Fletcher and his colleagues (1985) furnish a fourth source in their discussion of Countesthorpe as one of four British schools that faced concerted community resistance to their perceived progressivism. What emerges from these

sources is a composite picture of a school that undertook an almost complete alteration of traditional educational patterns in Britain.

Among Countesthorpe's early innovations were longer teaching periods, independent study time for pupils, interdisciplinary curriculum, individualised study packages, democratic decision making involving pupils, open architecture and community participation in school programmes. Mason hoped that the school would model successful primary school practices such as individualised learning, group work, interdisciplinary studies and flexible timetables. Each of these innovations was a significant departure from the 'grammar' (Tyack and Tobin, 1994) of most British schools, and in combination represented a dramatic shift away from accepted structures and practices. Tim McMullan was appointed as the first Principal of Countesthorpe. He arrived at Countesthorpe after 12 years as a head elsewhere. His experiences had resulted in what he described as "constructive disillusionment" (Fletcher et al, 1985) with more traditional schools and a determination to create a different educational ethos at his new school. "Tim McMullan refused to take on the traditional headmaster's authority and it was agreed appointments and promotions were to be made by groups of staff after full discussion with everyone involved. During the staff appointing process every attempt was made to appoint people who agreed with the aims of the school" (Fletcher et al, 1985, p. 55). Rather than opening as an 'upper' school with senior pupils L.E.A. demographics obliged the school to begin its first three years with 850, 11 to 14 year olds. This required a significant shift in approach. The school opened with great public fanfare.

At the time of its opening, Countesthorpe was described as “the most advanced working model in Europe of the theories of secondary education” and a “lighthouse like no other in Europe” (Fletcher et al, 1985). Unfortunately, Countesthorpe opened at a time when there were discussions of administrative amalgamation of Leicester City and Leicestershire. The city had no comprehensives and the pre-eminent newspaper The Leicester Mercury made a point of denigrating comprehensives in general and Countesthorpe in particular, as the most visible and high profile symbol of ‘comprehensiveness’. Headlines such as “Concept of New School Under Fire; New School Is A Monstrosity; New School Like a Holiday Camp; Vandalism at College” (Fletcher et al, 1985) stirred up opposition to the new school. When vandalism or thefts occurred at the school, they were used as proof of the inappropriateness of the school’s philosophy and the incompetence of its operation. Its successes were ignored or glossed over in the press. Critics questioned the appropriateness of the interdisciplinary curriculum, the lack of sanctions for pupils’ misbehaviour, the collegial approach to decision making and the quality of the school’s standards. McMullan, the first principal, never responded satisfactorily to these criticisms. He appeared to have misread the nature and vociferousness of the attack and failed to respond to legitimate concerns. McMullan resigned in 1972, apparently worn down by efforts to get the school started and defend its uniqueness.

The new principal, John Watt arrived at a time when the Department of Education, pressured by a small group of dissident Countesthorpe parents, and supported by the local Conservative M. P., initiated an inspection of Countesthorpe. The report that became public in 1974 supported most of Countesthorpe’s innovations, but suggested that the school had tried too many innovations, too quickly. In essence, the school under

McMullan had “overreached” (Fullan, 1991). Watt acknowledged that much had been attempted and perhaps without sufficient preparation and identified 10 errors that the school had made such as insufficient staff response to pupil misbehaviour, inappropriate curriculum and instructional practices for the age range that actually came to Countesthorpe in the beginning, and poor record keeping, to mention just a few. He set to resolving these issues quickly to reassure the community. The new principal made structural changes to reflect changed realities of the school, such as instituting the 16+ examinations which pupils needed to move on to higher levels, and he attended to the legitimate concerns of parents such as discipline and vandalism, while retaining the integrity of the essential pupil-centredness of the Countesthorpe experiment.

Countesthorpe and its progressive brand of education became in the late 1970s, a ‘lightening rod’ for criticism of progressive education in general and comprehensive schools in particular. A most revealing exchange of letters between Michael Armstrong, the Head of Social Studies for the school, and G.H. Bantock, a Professor at the University of Leicester School of Education and a critic of progressivism and of Countesthorpe, reflect the pervasiveness of the arguments (Watts, 1977). Bantock insisted that schools such as Countesthorpe, which were pupil centred, would diminish academic excellence and by implication, argued that quality was undermined by efforts to ensure equity. Like so many of Byron’s critics in my own study, Bantock had never visited the school and seemed to base his opinion on ideology and hearsay. Conversely, Armstrong contended that Countesthorpe’s academic standards were not only high but were also a major priority for the school, although not the only one. Like many innovators, he was hard pressed to prove his claims. Clearly, much of Countesthorpe’s notoriety was its appeal to a progressive pupil-centred ideological position. There was a

great deal of rhetoric but little empirical evidence to substantiate either the progressive or conservative positions. Bantock was not alone. Hargreaves (1984), for example, describes the “contrastive rhetoric” used by an administrator in another school to impugn the Countesthorpe approach as an example of outrageous progressivism. This criticism from other educators appeared to be quite wide-spread.

By the 1980s the challenges to progressivism in Britain were more than just rhetorical. Evans (1983), writing about Countesthorpe in the early 1980s at a time of severe budget cuts, expressed the concern that the kind “of education we have striven to create is based upon personal relations, but to maintain the quality of this approach is becoming more difficult as cuts impel us towards mass schooling” (p. 29). Perhaps even more ominously, he predicted that the team system that was at the very heart of Countesthorpe’s democratic approach to education was “vulnerable” because of “current social and political change and their educational consequences”(p. 29). He continued by describing a general problem for innovative schools when external contexts shift:

This vulnerability arises out of the deviance of the team system from the norm. It is not supported by an infrastructure of teacher training, parental attitudes, governors’ attitudes, examination boards, LEA, central government and so forth. It is out of step, and therefore at risk (pp. 29-30).

Implications

Countesthorpe, like most of the new schools identified in this summary, was initiated by a dynamic and progressive Chief Executive Officer within a school district (L.E.A.). The

school's first principal, McMullan, had a very clear and well articulated set of principles or goals for the school and had the freedom to initiate his dream and to hire a staff to fit his predetermined concept. As a result, teachers committed themselves to both social and academic goals for the pupils. Perhaps the unique feature of Countesthorpe was the school's process of decision-making through a 'moot' or mini-parliament, which included teacher and pupil representatives. The principal initially deferred to the 'moot', but in time as external pressures mounted, subsequent leaders became more directive and less democratic.

Problems at Countesthorpe emerged early. While the team innovation resolved some issues, others persisted. The need to produce learning materials for the school's individualised approaches to teaching created a heavy work load for staff members, but as time went by their commitment waned. As Evans (1983) explained, staff who remained at Countesthorpe 10 years later "cannot give the same amount of time to the task that they could when they first came" (p. 30) because of changes in their own family circumstances. He also added that "recent increases in the number of new teachers has presented us with the problem of induction into the maintenance of our ethos and organisation in acute form" (p. 30). These were both issues in the Byron case.

Micropolitics created tensions. The school staff found that attempts to democratise decision-making were fraught with difficulty when decision-making roles and accountability were not clarified. Similarly, as other studies have shown that the creation of interdisciplinary departments did not necessarily promote greater collegiality and harmony (for example, Hargreaves, 1992). Countesthorpe also experienced a continuing political problem shared by many new and innovative schools; a conflict of beliefs and

values between innovators in the school and the parents and community who send their pupils to the school. The aspirations of innovators, usually defined on intellectual and moral grounds were incompatible with parental goals of social mobility. Conversely, parents raised in one type of school system, had difficulty understanding more progressive modes that placed less emphasis on external motivation and control of pupils.

Schools such as Countesthorpe often open with great publicity and fanfare, gain national and international notoriety and sometimes make exaggerated claims about the efficacy of their approaches. Critics in other schools, the press, and concerned parents tend to magnify relatively minor issues into major crises, which in other schools often go unreported or are dealt with quietly. At Countesthorpe, the theft of some library books became an attack on individualised learning, school discipline and the informality of pupil-teacher relationships. The natural growing pains of a new school, what Smith and his colleagues (1987) call the 'liability of newness', are publicised and often exaggerated by critics, or used for ulterior political purposes such as discrediting comprehensive education as in the Countesthorpe case. When one combines the physical and intellectual demands on teachers and administrators of opening a new school with the stress of responding to a host of critics, the continuing survival of schools such as Countesthorpe as a progressive schools is a feat of considerable personal courage on the part of the staff.

The 'Countesthorpe case' as I have reconstructed it, is not a case in the same way as others described here because it is a composite of four investigations of the school completed at different times and for different purposes. It is therefore, quite uneven in the depth and breadth of its descriptions of the school. In spite of these limitations, the Countesthorpe studies have been instructive because they describe the 'attrition of

change' in a very different context. They highlight problems which result when the professional concept of a "good school" (Lightfoot, 1988) differs from the community's concept of a "real school" (Metz, 1991), and they also demonstrate the powerful influence of the external context on innovative schools. An in-depth study of this interesting but controversial school would have been particularly helpful to the Byron study because it would appear that the school's evolution paralleled that of Byron in many significant ways.

3. Thornlea: A case study of an innovative secondary school

The third case study is the first of three that describe schools in Ontario. The study of Thornlea High School by Fullan and his colleagues (1972) is of particular interest to the present Byron study because it is an Ontario school which influenced the planning committee that initiated Lord Byron. Opened in 1969, a year before Lord Byron, Thornlea is located in Ontario in an area of urban growth north of Metropolitan Toronto. In 1971, Fullan and his colleagues (1972) spent from February to April researching Thornlea to "provide knowledge of the characteristics and workings of individual innovative schools and school systems" (p. v). More precisely, their report on Thornlea "describes the school's goals, the administrative and social structures and the process used to implement innovations" (p. v). Thornlea was intended to be a pupil centred school with an innovative individualised timetable, and unique leadership structure. Pupils, teachers and parents were to be involved in school decisions through a number of advisory councils. At the time of the study, the researchers felt that the school had made an impressive beginning, although they qualified their enthusiasm when they acknowledged their brief three year exposure to the school.

The York Board of Education's Director originated Thornlea with the view that it would pilot many suggested but unproved innovations that were current in the province at the time. Supported by a liberal Board of Education, the Director established a building design committee composed mainly of teachers. He then arranged for the appointment of a well-respected principal who was given the freedom to hire a staff, organise the programme and design a leadership structure. After two years of operation, the researchers complimented the school's staff members on the success of many of their efforts, but at the same time identified a number of potential issues which in time could negatively affect the new setting's structures and purposes. The researchers concluded that:

Innovative schools seem to require more parental involvement than more traditional schools. Innovative schools, by definition, introduce many new activities, which causes parents to question the purposes of the new approaches, the ultimate accomplishments of the students, and so on. Without involvement, parents obtain information about what is taking place by such indirect means as rumours, which are very open to distortion and exaggeration (p. 23).

Implications

From their interviews, Fullan and his colleagues state that "misinformation circulating about the school's activities was incredibly high" (p. 23). From this observation, they suggest further that "concern on the part of parents grows in isolation from the school,

and parents communicate with the school only when a crisis or something negative occurs” (p. 23). Ironically, Thornlea, like Byron, had more avenues for involvement of parents than most schools, but even at this early stage of Thornlea’s history, the potential for misunderstanding and disagreement was evident. The similarities between these observations and the community situations described in the previous two cases is striking - an engaged and innovative staff pursuing a vision of schooling that is either questioned or opposed by parents and the larger community.

Fullan and his colleagues also highlighted other possible sources of difficulty for the new setting. These included potential financial constraints, the rapid increase in the school’s population in the first three years, and pressure to prove empirically that the school was producing academically strong pupils. In addition, they commented on the professional and personal demands an innovative organisation puts on individuals. As in the previous case, Countesthorpe, staff at Thornlea expended considerable physical, intellectual, and psychological energy, not only trying to get the school moving towards a shared image, but also in defending the school from its critics. These are crucial issues in the Byron study. The Thornlea study is a detailed and thorough work, but for purposes of the present study, frustratingly short-term. It asks many questions and offers a number of speculations, but leaves most of the important questions related to the implementation and institutionalisation of change unanswered..

4. Bayridge Secondary School

Fullan and Eastabrook’s (1977) study of Bayridge Secondary School in Eastern Ontario analyses the planning for a new, innovative school, and examines the implementation of

planning committee through the first year of the school's operation. Its limitation as a case study is its narrow focus in terms of both topics and time. Its usefulness is as a guide to planning for innovation. Perhaps the most important insight is the researchers' description of the gap between the vision and intentions of the planning team, and the reality of its first year as it tried to operate with a partially finished building and shifting Board policies. Fullan and Eastabrook (1977) observed that the Innovations Committee became "a group of people working on a common problem independently of the larger community, tending to grow in a direction incomprehensible to their co-workers and associates who had not experienced the learning process undergone by the committee members" (p. 224). They were able to document the roots of the estrangement that seems to confound many new experimental schools (Gold and Miles, 1981; Fletcher et al, 1985; Smith et al, 1987).

Implications

It is useful to the Byron study because of its Ontario context as well as its focus on the origins of the estrangement between the innovative school and its larger community. This is a pattern which permeates the Byron experience. As a case study, this is quite incomplete because the actual implementation of the committee's plans was either changed or aborted in the early stages, and the reader, therefore, is left not knowing the long-term consequences. No subsequent published studies of the school are available.

5. Project Excellence: A case study of a student centred school

During the 1986/87 school year the Ontario Ministry of Education commissioned a third party evaluation of 'Project Excellence' at École Secondaire Cochrane High School (E.S.C.H.S.). This is case of a secondary school which, of necessity, introduced a radically different approach to teaching and curriculum from that in other schools in Ontario. In the early 1980s, this school located in a northern town experienced declining enrolment, a reduction in its teacher complement and a related loss of course offerings for pupils, which further exacerbated the enrolment problem. In 1985, the principal, with the support of the school district and the teaching staff, reorganised the school into a totally individualised programme in which each course or credit was composed of 20 units. As pupils completed each unit, their accomplishments were tested, and if they succeeded they moved onto the next unit. Each teacher assumed the role of facilitator and support to pupils' learning as opposed to the source of the course. Pupils moved from one resource centre to another at their own pace and as they felt the need. In this way the school was able to offer a wide diversity of programmes at the three levels of difficulty required by the Ontario Ministry of Education.

For E.S.C.H.S. and the Cochrane community this was a revolutionary change. With only nine months of preparation, teachers and pupils launched into the first school year. Teachers frantically wrote curriculum. With little help from the school district or the Ministry of Education, the staff worked hard to make the concept work. The report by Anderson and Stiegelbauer (1990) examined virtually every aspect of the school including pupil and teacher attitudes, the views of pupils who transferred out of the school, the attitudes of parents, credit completion, pupil grades, and drop out rates. The purpose of the study is clearly to record the successes and identify areas of difficulty or potential difficulty.

Like Countesthorpe, the individualised programmes required teachers to expend considerable time and energy to develop, rewrite and continually update curriculum units. This workload created mental and physical exhaustion. After initial heroic efforts, teachers felt 'burned out'. Many teachers left the school, which created the problem of the induction of new staff. With existing staff so involved in daily survival, induction was not well carried out. Similarly, investment in on-going professional development was crucial, but time and teacher energy were at a premium.

For parents, the greatest difficulty was to understand such a radical departure from conventional schooling. Convincing them of the efficacy of an approach that was so removed from their own school experience was a huge challenge, especially because a more traditional school was a geographically viable option for pupils and parents. Individualised programmes presented major problems of time use for pupils and adjustment difficulties for teachers who were used to a more directive role.

Implications

Born out of a desperate need to provide a breadth of programme to meet government requirements, it would seem that this radical departure was almost destined to be in trouble because the change was so dramatic and implemented without a great deal of teacher preparation. It would also appear that it was imposed on the parents, and the pupils were more or less expected to adjust without any preparation or training. This was equally true at Thornlea and Bayridge.

While this study depicts events and consequences in detail, there is little in-depth analysis of teachers' cultures, community values, and the impact of the change on individuals. Teachers, pupils and parents are treated as a monolithic group, which preclude a clear understanding of the dynamics of the school and the change process.

6. Whose school is it anyway?

Gold and Miles (1981) provide a much more in depth study of a new and innovative school. This study follows the evolution of a newly constructed kindergarten to grade 6 elementary school, Lincoln Acres, from its origins to the completion of its second year of operation. Although the study is not about a secondary school, it is instructive to the Byron study because of its analysis of the conflict that emerged over the direction of the school between the school's professional staff and the parent community. The authors describe the issue:

At the core, the issue was whether educators or parents had the right to determine the sort of education the school would offer . . . More generally the book explores the problem of how formal organizations (such as schools) with power based on expertise relate to primary groups (such as neighbourhoods, voluntary associations and families) with power based on participative rights. There was a basic tension in Lincoln Acres between professional judgment and citizen participation in decision-making: the conflict was in many ways between expertise and democracy as a basis for decision-making (p. 5).

Lincoln Acres was situated in the Washingtonville school district, a middle class suburban area, in the eastern United States. Bob Biddle, the superintendent of the district, was well respected by many for his progressive and energetic leadership, although viewed with suspicion by more conservative elements in the community. He had a very clear vision of what he expected Lincoln Acres to be:

The major focus is on educational change and the change process . . . In this school we want a re-definition of education, a re-definition of the institution of the school, a re-definition of the involvement of parents in the school, and a re-definition of education as opposed to instruction, which is all that education is today (p. 5).

While the design committee had no community representation, Biddle worked closely with the Lincoln Acres Homeowners' Association to get district approval for the building of the school. He shared the plan of the building publicly and while some questioned the openness of the building, it was not a major issue at the time. Some citizens insisted that Biddle had promised demountable walls. When the building was completed without walls, these citizens, who for the most part opposed 'open' education, accused Biddle of dishonesty. Biddle included both community representatives and educators on a committee to recommend a principal to him. Biddle thus tried to combine democratic community participation with the educational expertise of the teachers. Rather than facilitating the decision, however, the process created ill-will. Agreement on a principal between the educators and the community representatives proved difficult, even though both groups had agreed to a set of criteria for selection. To compound the problem, Biddle overruled the recommendations of the committee to ensure the appointment of a

candidate who had a view of education similar to his own. As one citizen committee member recalled, “we worked hard, and then not to take our recommendation hurt” (p. 61). The community people felt co-opted and cheated.

As Sarason (1972) has suggested, the prehistory of a new setting impacts significantly on its future success. It was into this environment of tension between conservative and more liberal citizens and school board members, that Ellis Brown was appointed as the school’s first principal. A young man, with limited experience in education, and only one and a half years of experience in a rural open concept school, he arrived to find that the plans for the school were completed and Biddle had committed the school to open education with team teaching. Even before the school opened, Brown found himself defending open education and promising a superior brand of education in his school to that which the pupils had received previously. Most of the pupils would come from a rather traditional school at nearby Fernwood which was geographically close enough to provide an alternative to Lincoln Acres. Since the district’s enrolment was declining, Brown was obliged to choose his staff exclusively from internal district candidates. His choices were quite limited. Once the school began in September, an important change took place in the nature of community criticism of the school and its programme:

. . . during the spring and the summer they feared what could possibly happen in the yet unopened school. Now they were objecting to what they thought was actually happening in the classrooms. From a critique of the abstract concepts that formed a philosophy of open education, they had now moved to a critique of many daily practices in the school based on close observation of the classrooms (Gold and Miles, 1981, p. 229).

Brown found himself caught between his policy of openness to the parents and the increasing insecurity of the staff. The staff worked exceedingly hard to make the concept of the school work, and held innumerable meetings with parents to clarify programmes and listen to concerns. While the staff members all shared a belief in open education, few had the management and teaching strategies to make it work, and even fewer had the conceptual understanding necessary to advocate for this view of education in a suspicious and very knowledgeable community. Their efforts to convince the community seemed only to heighten parental concerns. Increasingly the teachers came to view the parents as the enemy, and the principal as unsupportive because he failed to back their curricular and pedagogical decisions. In the meantime, a parent teacher association was established, chaired by a vocal critic of the school and its teachers. The teachers quietly boycotted its meetings and gave the new association president the 'silent treatment'.

Parents began to transfer their pupils to other schools. Rumours about lack of discipline, vandalism, noise levels and poor pupil performance in basic subjects like reading began to circulate in the community. Interestingly, the most vocal critics were parents with ties to the school district, either as employees or teachers in other schools. With increasing pressures to tighten the programme, formalise subjects, and adopt more conventional teaching and programming patterns, the superintendent sent a board official into the school ostensibly 'to help' the teachers. This effort to support coincided with the principal's attempt to dismiss one of the teachers. The staff's view of the 'consultant' changed. She was seen as a district spy.

This ‘intrusive’ district intervention, the attempt to fire a colleague, and the on-going criticism in the community, resulted in some of the teachers’ searching for support from their union. As the authors stated, “the use of force within the school created a counterforce; the teachers mobilized in opposition to the administration in an attempt to reestablish professional privilege” (p. 290). The particular strategy used was what Gold and Miles (1981) describe as “conflict bureaucracy” This entails teachers’ employing rules to achieve their primary goals. The teachers sought to limit the power of the principal and the parents through enforcing the rules of the collective agreement. In the case of the principal, they launched a grievance about the cleanliness of the school. To deal with parents, they forced their reluctant principal to limit the accessibility of parents to the school and circumscribe their movements within it.

As tensions increased, the school’s problems became the subject of contention at the district level, and conservatives used the controversy of Lincoln Acres as a vehicle to embarrass Biddle whom they saw as the initiator of this troubled progressive school. The turning point came with the resignation of Brown, the principal. He blamed the circumstances of his arrival and lack of support at the district level for his difficulties with the teachers and the parents. His own political naiveté, his lack of experience, and his loss of trust among the teachers compounded his problems.

The assignment of a new principal resulted in walls going up. The teachers retreated into their own classrooms; basal readers were unpacked, and within a relatively short time the school was viewed by parents as a conventional one. The P.T.A. changed leadership, and attended to such social issues as the building of a new play area, and removed itself from the professional aspects of the school. Lincoln had become a “real school” (Metz, 1991).

The widespread criticism of the school ended. In a survey of public opinion after the second year of the school when ‘normality’ seemed to reign, the researchers found that “the changes that increased parent satisfaction were of a non-instructional nature, and had more to do with the efforts that the faculty and administration made to improve the community’s image of the school” (p. 338).

Implications

This study is an in-depth case of a new and innovative elementary school and its principal and staff, which, in only two and a half years, went from the initial experimentation and creation stage that most new schools seem to experience, through upheaval and retrenchment, ultimately to arrive at a compromise that the school’s community could accept. This case is particularly instructive because of the role played by the community. The school was located in a middle class, well educated suburban community that was well informed on educational issues. The key community leaders, for example, were themselves employed in education - many in the same district as Lincoln Acres. Most parents were at the stage of their own life cycle in which they were pursuing careers and raising young children. In addition, the citizens had originally been organised into a homeowners’ association, and later in the Parent-Teachers Association. Invited by the district to choose a principal, its leaders intended to influence the school’s development, not only in the style of the building, but in the nature of the instructional programme and the school’s organisation. As the authors indicate, “under certain circumstances a community can exercise enough power over a formal organisation to change it rapidly and fundamentally” (p. 353).

Clearly the community's conception of school as a 'real school' differed significantly from that of the originators of Lincoln Acres. The district's superintendent, first principal and many original staff members pursued a vision of a school that promoted both social and academic goals and employed individualised programmes and teaching strategies.

Conversely, the community as represented by the P.T.A. appeared more interested in traditional classroom structures, academic achievement and a building with more closed classrooms. The community believed that the principal, and particularly the teachers did not possess the pedagogical skills to make the open school structure function, nor the ability to explain their innovations satisfactorily. As a result the principal and staff failed to influence the community to adopt their image of a 'good school'.

More important, in spite of the teachers' sincere effort and commitment to make the new concept work, they were not well prepared before the school opened to individualise programmes and use the open design of the building. Collegiality which is fundamental to team teaching and open education existed in pockets and tended to disintegrate as community criticism increased. The leadership at both the district and the school levels failed to give the community concerns the credence they deserved, and responded with 'too little, too late'. Teachers believed that they had become 'scapegoats' for administrative incompetence. The principal quickly lost the trust and support of his staff. Faced by unrelenting attacks on their expertise, integrity, and dedication, teachers protected themselves by becoming more insular, 'freezing out' parents and using a union-inspired 'conflict bureaucracy' strategy to deal with the district and school management and the perceived threats in the environment. Parents seemed to react more to the image of the school as a disorderly, unstructured, 'do your own thing' environment, than to the substance of the programme or the strategies teachers used. One major issue that this

case raises therefore, is how ‘professionals’ in innovative schools and their districts manage (or mismanage) community perceptions and commitments, when the image of schooling which the community supports and has experienced runs contrary to that which the innovators seek to establish. This study provides a rich description of the micropolitics of the school. It details the interaction of the school with the community, the relationships with the district, and the teachers’ union.

The study however is limited by its time span. It covers only two and one half years in the life of the school. Its discussion of internal interactions within the school, except between staff and the principal, is rather shallow. As external observers, the researchers spent little time analysing the culture of the school. When the district fired two teachers the researchers passed over these major events with little discussion of the process for dismissal or reactions of the remaining teachers. The principals are replaced with limited discussion of their impact on the school and its pupils. How the decisions were made and by whom are left unstated. The district’s culpability in events such as the firing of the two teachers and the dismissal of the principal is glossed over. This study, in which teachers are assailed from all sides and left unsupported by management, misses the opportunity to comment on teacher biographies which in some ways could have been the most useful contribution in light of contemporary efforts to drive educational reform through policy development (Cohen, 1995). The only biography that is developed in some detail is that of the principal. The reader is left needing to know more about the teachers who were dismissed as well as the micro-political dynamics which left some ‘teams’ dysfunctional. McNamara’s (1980) critique of the outsider’s inability to understand the teachers perspective might well apply to this case.

On balance however, Gold and Miles (1981) have provided a detailed and helpful case for the present study because of its description of how factors in the school's external context, the community, the school district, the superintendent and the teachers' union interacted with the internal context of principal, and teaching staff to accelerate the attrition of change at Lincoln Acres. It shows how a school staff under 'siege' withdraws from school-wide involvement to safer commitments such as in the classroom. It also provides, in microcosm, a possible life cycle of a new and innovative school: from creation and experimentation through overreaching and entropy to survival and continuity.

7. Beachside Comprehensive

Ball's (1981) study of Beachside Comprehensive School is an in-depth case of a secondary school in the United Kingdom as it attempts to meet the challenges of becoming a comprehensive school. He states that:

I am concerned with the dynamics of selection, socialisation and change within the school as these processes are experienced and dealt with by the pupils and their teachers. The stress is upon the emergent nature of social interaction as well as the playing out of social, and cultural forces in the school (p. x).

To describe and understand the school's social system from the perspective of its participants, he uses observation, interviews and survey methods. He establishes the school within a larger context by reviewing school information, artefacts and statistics. Ball's stated intent is to use this single case to "illuminate the more general issues of

comprehensive education” (p. 1) and particularly the introduction of mixed-ability grouping of pupils in classes. His study is similar to Lacey’s (1970) in that he examines the impact of school structure on the least advantaged pupils. The Hightown Grammar School of Lacey’s study (1970) was overtly selective. Ball contends, from his study of a typical comprehensive school which is ostensibly more egalitarian than grammar schools, that “so far there is little evidence from research to suggest that the abolition of a system of overt organisational selection in a school will establish a more egalitarian form of education” (p. 21).

While this study is more concerned with the substance of change - mixed ability grouping in comprehensive schools - it also contributes to an understanding of the nature of change. Ball suggests that studies such as of Smith and Keith’s (1971) view change from the perspective of the outsider and thus “change comes to be seen as a non-negotiable reality”. Ball (1981) argues that their approach is presented as “fixed, specific, and immutable, and as such is normally subjected to a system’s model of analysis in terms of input-throughput-output: the achievement of specific goals and measurable or clearly definable outcomes” (p. 167). Conversely, the Beachside study’s “account of an internally-generated change is derived primarily from the interpretations of it made by the actors involved in ‘changing’”. From this perspective the nature of the change appears to be less of “an immutable or fixed reality”(p. 167). Stated in simplest terms, change looks different from inside an institution than from outside. What may be seen from outside as a straight-forward issue of cause-effect is, from the inside, a complex social process. Ball elaborates this point when he states:

From the present study it is clear that a teacher's response to a proposed innovation and later his implementation of it, if it is accepted, are heavily dependent upon his commitment to professional and organizational norm reference-groups, particularly his subject department and subject sub-culture community, and upon the limitations of perceived constraints upon his practice . . . (p. 287).

Implications

The importance of Ball's discussion of change processes for the Byron study is his focus on the social processes through which "change is inter-subjectively created, defined and sustained, and through which its meaning is collectively negotiated" (p. 237). Ball further suggests that external perspectives on school change and how teachers view change are fundamentally different. Considering external criteria, such as measures of pupil achievement, drop-out rates and attendance records, Ball found little change in teaching approaches, but from the teacher's point of view, there had been significant change. The external point of view, that of researchers, tends to look at change as revolutionary, while teachers see change as 'gradualist' and 'improving'. "Indeed, when the system of constraints that impinge upon the teachers' practice is taken into consideration the possibilities for revolutionary change in teaching methods are seen to be limited" (p. 237).

In addition to his contribution to the reader's understanding of change, his approach to case study research is instructive. Methodologically his study attempts to answer the question, "what is going on here" (p. xvii)? To achieve this understanding he combines description and interpretation of how the actors - teachers and pupils - interpret the

situation with extensive descriptions and analyses of the larger social context of the school, the community and various levels of government. In recognising the limitations of his approach he provides appropriate cautions for other researchers:

What is offered here is an approximation of reality, an account derived from the experiences of a single researcher, with all the problems of selection, chance and bias that entails; an historical snapshot of an institution in the process of change (p. xviii)

Ball's study is important in three ways: the study's content captures the interplay of egalitarian principles within a meritocratic culture; its focus on the actors and their relationship to the larger context are useful to an understanding of the change process; his analysis of the various subject communities in the school and their differentiated responses to change, and his methodological approaches contribute to a comprehension of the potential and limitations of the case study as a research vehicle. Its limits are acknowledged by the author. It does not to any great extent, place Beachside in its larger context and the fact that it is a snapshot limits the reader's understanding of the implementation and institutionalisation of change.

8. The divided school

Woods' (1979) study is of the transition of a secondary school from a secondary modern to a comprehensive school. Located in a northern England industrial setting, it is of interest on two counts. First, he goes beyond the surface appearances and articulated purposes and activities of this school to examine the interpersonal and intra-personal

realities behind the public facade. He states that the predominant theme of the book is one of division:

. . . division of 'self' and of 'consciousness' on the part of both pupils and teachers, division of public and private spheres of life, between choice and direction, between laughter and conflict, pleasure and pain, as well as divisions between and within groups of pupils, teachers and parents owing to their different social locations, both in regard to the school and to the social structure (p. 256).

Second, his methodological approach, which derives from symbolic interactionism, allows the author to 'open the black box' that is Lowfield school and look inside at the various roles played by teachers, pupils and parents. He describes teachers as appearing to wear different hats according to circumstances, acting as 'educationists', as 'strategists', as 'professionals', and as 'private persons'. He focuses on how people continually interpret the world around them and ascribe meaning to the events and symbols around them: "Hence the emphasis on 'perspectives', the frameworks through which we make sense of the world, and on different 'contexts' which influence the formation and operation of these perspectives" (p. 2). This study identifies a number of important issues. The most obvious problem is identified in the title of the study.

Not only do various groups' perspectives differ, but they change depending on circumstances. For example, the teacher's classroom perspective is one of survival, ensuring quiet compliance and meeting imposed obligations. To the public, however, the teacher presents the professional perspective, of expertise, self-protection, and

separateness, whereas in the staff room, the teacher can view the institution through a “private framework” (p. 239). In particular Woods (1979) describes the significance of laughter as an important vehicle for the teacher to ease the transition from the other roles of survivor or professional to the private person.

He suggests that these divisions are the result of teachers, pupils and parents interpreting reality through various perspectives and adapting to institutional realities. These accommodations are often masked by obfuscation and rhetoric. He uses two examples. While the rhetoric suggests that pupils are free to make subject choices, the reality is that this freedom is circumscribed by strategies to ensure that pupils are sorted appropriately, which at Lowfield tended to be by socio-economic class. A second illustration is the reporting of pupils’ performance to parents. While completing a professional responsibility, teachers use techniques which “cut them off from parents and emphasise the boundaries of the school, but at the same time seek to enlist the aid of parents in promoting the ideal models that teachers have defined” (p. 240).

School life, he contends, is a continuous process of negotiation between and among the various groups. For example, Woods (1979) states that teachers and pupils are “rule conscious”. There are two kinds of rules; the formal institutional rules and the informal rules of the classroom and interpersonal contacts. The implicit rules often supersede the formal rules. A teacher of a lower form found that disciplining a pupil at a higher level was frowned on by colleagues although within the formal rules this was considered appropriate. In other words, contexts become important. The appropriate teacher or pupil behaviour in one setting may be grossly inappropriate in another setting. Woods

(1979) highlights the importance of these three concepts, negotiation, rules, and contexts to the culture of a school and shows how they contribute to various sub-cultures.

He also suggests that the institutional structure of the school builds “constraints and conditions on relationships” between and among teachers, pupils, and parents “which effectively removes them from the ‘personal sphere’” (p. 22). These are the cultural aspects of a school’s operation that are necessary to ensure its effective functioning, which over time become rituals and routines and often unquestioned. Procedures such as streaming become so routine that they are taken for granted and pupils, parents and teachers merely adjust to them. He makes the point that as Lowfield grew in size, rules and routines increasingly were invoked to run the school, and the school was seen by many to be losing its personal touch. Woods (1979) sees teachers, pupils and parents in a perpetual struggle to maintain their individual identities in the face of bureaucratic rationalism which threatens to consume anything personal and non-rational. They are forced to play roles that are outside of themselves.

Whether intentionally or not, and in spite of the meritocratic and egalitarian rhetoric, Woods concludes that school structures tend to replicate the class structure of the outside society. The individual teacher can only mitigate its effects. Woods (1979) summarises the school’s relationship with its community:

. . . a selective society might exert a strong influence over the basic organization of a school, and the distribution of pupils within it, and institutionalization might force the teacher into constructing ideal models, but it does not necessarily have to be governed by criteria valued by the so-called dominant culture (p. 252).

The author provides a description of the school that goes beyond that which many other case studies present. He outlines the values and beliefs that supported practices which were often at odds with the articulated purposes of the school. As the preceding discussion indicates, he offers a number of generalisations which corroborate other work on British schools about the impact of streaming and the inequities which contradict stated goals (D. Hargreaves, 1967, Lacey, 1970, Ball, 1981). The author uses 'participant observation' as his basic methodology to gather data and to verify his conclusions. Woods' (1979) direct and indirect critique of the multiple roles people play, the inauthenticity of most relationships between groups, and the inegalitarianism of the secondary modern school, speak eloquently to the need for change.

This is a powerful study that shows the value of the case study approach in allowing one to dig beneath the surface of school structures and cultures. It demonstrates the necessity of the researcher's probing beyond what the 'keepers' of the organisation might reveal about its operation. This work also gives insight into the origins of divisive sub-cultures on a staff and the antagonism that so often exists between teachers and their community. The nature of the research prevents the author from elaborating on larger contextual issues and saying more about micropolitical and leadership issues. It is however, an insightful and instructive case. In probing the inauthenticity of teachers' relationships with their communities, he suggests a line of investigation which is vital to an understanding of a new school. Woods suggestion that teachers play different roles in the classroom, the staffroom, and in their interactions with the community provides a clue to the apparent inability of the staffs of many new and innovative schools such as Byron to

enrol other stakeholders, particularly the pupils and their parents in their vision of a 'good' school.

Multiple site cases

In the next section, I review case studies of a number of schools. These studies have been used to discover patterns across multiple cases in order to develop generalisations about various themes and topics. Anderson (1990) suggests that:

the extent to which generalizability is possible will relate to the extent to which a case is typical or involves typical phenomena. Multiple case studies sometimes provide such a base and also often indicate exceptions within the cases. It is easy to identify an exception when there are multiple examples and it is also often possible to gain insight into the reasons such an exception exists (p. 164).

The cases included in the following section describe secondary schools experiencing change and, as such, are instructive to the present project. Within these multiple case studies are examples of innovative, new schools as well as a few longitudinal cases.

9. British comprehensive schools

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Britain experienced a significant reorganisation of secondary education. Rapid increases in enrolment led to the construction of new schools and the consolidation of smaller schools into non-selective comprehensive schools that attempted to provide programmes for a diversity of pupils. Moon (1983) and his colleagues developed six case studies of well known and successful comprehensive schools. The author of each case writes from the perspective of a school leader within the respective schools and describes the evolution of the school over at least a ten year period. Each describes the historical and political factors that led to the school's creation or re-creation and the 'growing pains' experienced by each. Each author candidly analyses the successes and failures of the school and offers interpretations for changes over time. In his summary, Moon describes the challenges and accomplishments shared by these diverse schools.

In virtually all the schools in this collection, the newly created comprehensive schools faced major community relations issues. A second generalisation he is able to draw is that culture and structure in schools are closely linked. All the schools made valiant attempts to change the pervasive elitist culture of traditional British schooling by developing innovative structures to promote egalitarianism. The problems that arose within the schools were often the result of inadequate communications, or confused decision-making, or micro-political conflicts. Moon's (1983) third conclusion is that for change to occur for pupils, teachers need to be engaged in more collaborative activities.

In his summary, Moon briefly evaluates the potential of sustaining change in an increasingly negative environment of budget restrictions and government mandates. In

1983, he was not optimistic. Events in the United Kingdom have subsequently justified his attitude. This work, although limited by the relative brevity of the cases, by describing contextual pressures as well as the ideological conflicts which accompanied the comprehensivisation movement, provides useful British insights for the present case.

10. Two cultures of schooling: The case of middle schools

The British middle school movement of the 1970s parallels the movement towards secondary comprehensive schools. Hargreaves' (1986) middle school study provides both an historical and ethnographic analysis of the creation and gradual demise of this new and innovative approach to the education of pupils from eight to 12 years or nine to 13 years of age. By using case studies of two middle schools he shows how contradictory contextual factors play out in the two schools.

Moorehead school was a 585 pupil middle school located in a former secondary school building. When comprehensive reorganisation occurred in the Moorehead area many of the school's teachers were dislocated from their former grammar, secondary-modern, and primary schools, and assigned to Moorehead. The head's goal was to establish the middle school as a transition between the primary and secondary schools. He saw the school as attending to the unique educational and social needs of the early adolescent. Its neighbour, Riverside, was composed of a similar pupil intake but at 255 pupils was much smaller and had only one 'reorganised' staff member. Its staff tended to be younger and more inexperienced. Riverside's head leaned more towards the view of the middle school as an extension of primary school. What both school heads shared was a desire to ensure

that the secondary school's traditions did not play a major part in the development of their middle schools.

It soon became clear, however, that in spite of the best of managerial intentions, the contradictions inherent in middle schools themselves tended to undermine both the 'zone of transition' model and the 'primary extension' models of middle school. The historical divisions in British education had created sub cultures within each school. Unlike secondary schools with their balkanised departments and subject divisions, the divisions in middle schools "are lateral in character, the lines of demarcation and cleavage in organization and teacher sub-cultures occurring between different year groups".

Hargreaves states that "I have identified a pattern of year organization in both schools characterized by fragmentation, division and a particularly strong degree of insulation between the 'top'(secondary) and the 'bottom'(primary) ends of the middle" (p. 100).

Hargreaves (1986) study demonstrates rather well how 'historical lag', that is teachers' identification with their previous educational traditions, undermined the intention of an organisational model which would attend to the special needs of pupils in the 'middle years'. Teachers in the last two years of the middle school tended to follow the more traditional subject based, academic-elementary tradition, while the teachers in the first year of the three followed the developmental tradition of primary schools. The study also shows how policy decisions driven by expediency, such as the creation of the middle school to parallel the comprehensivisation of secondary schools, as opposed to educational principles, can undermine the organisation's stated purposes. Hargreaves study also reinforces the importance of economic and political factors in the larger context of individual schools. As the author states, "For whatever rhetoric of

educational purpose accompanied the establishment of middle schools - be these to do with primary school extension or the special needs of the middle years - it was the political and economic problems encountered in educational policy and state management more generally in the 1960s that were at the root of their emergence” (p. 205).

11. Improving the urban high school

This examination of five urban, inner-city American High Schools, of 900 to over 2000 pupils, is one of the more influential works in the school improvement field. Louis and Miles (1990) purposely chose schools in American inner cities that had undertaken specific improvement projects. All the schools were multi-cultural in composition and drawn from lower socio-economic levels of society. Minority and special-needs problems predominate in all the schools. The researchers chose the schools because people inside and outside the schools’ respective districts considered the selected schools ‘especially promising’. Each case is ‘nested’ in its district and state contexts. The authors and their research colleagues combined interviews, observations, and surveys from their three years of field work to describe and interpret each case and develop a number of important principles about the change process. They did most of their data gathering in the 1985-86 school year, and revisited each school in 1988 to structure an epilogue for each case.

While their conclusions are too numerous to include in total, there are a number which have direct application to the present case. Louis and Miles stress the importance of the principal’s leadership to effect change. “In the three most successful schools, principals were central to the development process: All staff acknowledged their contribution and leadership. In these schools, ownership was clearly located at the school level, even

where there was a state or district stimulus” (p.43). Conversely, in the two less successful schools, “district and state roles were stronger, sometimes overshadowing the role of school staff” (p. 43). They identify the need for a ‘critical mass’ of teachers committed to the reform effort. In all cases there was, “a small group of people who exercised real influence over the emergence of a plan, outside the operations of the planning group” (p.42). Continuing success, they suggest, depends on the problem seeking, problem coping and problem solving capacities of the schools. At the same time they indicate that some problems are beyond the school’s ability to solve. Major impediments to change are lack of time and energy on the part of teachers, lack of money, and inadequacies of the physical plant. Louis and Miles stress the importance of the ‘golden age’ mythology as an obstacle to change. It impedes change in two ways:

First, it typically masks a set of teacher assumptions that are primarily student-(or community-) blaming: The golden age occurred at a time when students wanted to learn and so on . . . Second, the myth typically acts as a barrier to real innovation in the school: It is essentially a conservative view, which emphasizes wanting to go back to the old ways. This is the downside of a stable staff: A stable staff may be necessary for change, but it is more likely to lead to a ‘golden age framework’(p. 187).

The school’s relationship to its district is another important emphasis of this study. On the positive side they suggest that “the best districts for school improvement may be characterised by the adage ‘less is more’ at least on the dimension of bureaucratisation. In general, high engagement is better for school improvement, coupled with fewer rules” (p.174). On the negative side, they list turnover in the district office, conflicts with the

district office, political pressures or tensions in the school's city, and conflict between the school and special interest groups in the community. Louis and Miles (1990) conclude from their sample cases that challenging change projects have a better chance of working than narrowly defined ones and that:

Really changing schools takes a long time, but time can build a strong investment in achieving the initial goals of the reform among those schools that persist. The longer schools have been involved in a change program, the more likely they are to indicate a long-term commitment to their efforts (p. 50).

This is one of the few comprehensive studies of change in secondary schools. Its focus is on the rational aspects of school improvement such as site-based management and school based planning and provides insight into the relationship of internal and external structures to school change. By minimising the non rational aspects of change such as micro-politics, internal conflict, and the impact of a school's culture, the study fails to develop the interconnections and interrelationships that provide a holistic approach to school change. It does however, remain one of the few systematic of change in secondary schools and a justifiably well regarded contribution to the school improvement literature.

12. Schools on trial

Until 1988, the legal basis for British education was the Education Act of 1944. Within this legislation was a stipulation that pupils were "to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents". Under this provision, a parent or a group of parents could

petition the Secretary of State for Education to initiate an investigation by Her Majesty's Inspectors of the practices of a school. Fletcher and his colleagues (1985) develop historical case studies of four schools, Risinghill School in Islington London, Summerhill Academy in Aberdeen Scotland, Countesthorpe in Leicestershire, and Sutton Centre, Nottinghamshire; which experienced 'trials' arising from challenges to their programmes and practices.

These four schools gave distinctive answers to the question What should a democratic comprehensive be like? All made great efforts to innovate, to be progressive and to be democratic. Each, too, ran foul of some parents and local politicians. A tension emerged between becoming democratic comprehensives and being the focus of conflicts in the community at large (p. ix).

All four schools were the creation of an enterprising L.E.A. director of education who the authors suggest saw the innovative school as a potential catalyst for change among the system's 'average schools'. In all four cases, the schools were opened by a head who was carefully chosen and supported by the director. These heads all rejected traditional education with its focus on examinations and certification, and advocated broadly democratic principles of education. "They neither separately provided for, nor made prime virtues of, discipline and examination performance" (p. 124). Many parents, however, saw these deviations from tradition as threats to their child's future success in life. They worried that their children were being used as 'guinea pigs' for unproved educational theories and practices. Not only did they question the purposes of change, they often "felt provoked by the speed with which they were being asked to respond" (p.126).

Each school opened with 'high hopes' and a commitment to realise 'comprehensive ideals' and a determination to innovate. The schools enjoyed the national and international limelight and were publicised by educators, academics, and the educational press as models of innovation to which other schools should aspire. As Fletcher and his colleagues (1985) explain:

. . . innovation refers to more than tinkering with technique, it means a movement of greater complexity and interrelatedness. In all our four case studies there were innovations in roles, relationships and the relative value given to the school subjects studied. More significantly perhaps, there was a culture and climate of innovation which were especially concerned with making schools more 'open' (p. 11).

Within the first few years of life, all four schools faced serious challenges from groups in their communities who quickly received powerful political support. In many ways these schools became a battleground for the national political debate between the British Conservative and Labour parties - between preservation of the traditional tripartite model of schooling, in which the grammar school served the more able, usually middle class children, the secondary-modern and vocational schools the remainder of the pupil population, and more egalitarian comprehensive schools, open to all pupils regardless of background.

The incidents that sparked the community challenge in each case were relatively minor on the surface, but hid deeper issues. At Risinghill the issue was a survey of pupils from the

school on racism that asked questions related to sexuality which in turn raised larger issues about sex education. A pupil's threatening behaviour with a knife evoked a controversy over discipline at Summerhill, when the head refused to use corporal punishment. Similarly, a series of relatively minor library thefts at Countesthorpe precipitated the community's questioning of independent learning. At Sutton Centre, a teacher's well intentioned lesson on why people swear became a rallying point for those who were concerned about school standards, and the school's decision not to have 16 year old pupils write examinations that was the practice in most other secondary schools. Local controversies that involved the school and a relatively small percentage of its parent population were ignited into a full-scale controversy by 'zealots' on both sides of the debate, the local and national press, and local politicians. In each case, the head became the focal point of attack and the authors compare the heads' situation to that of the 'denigration ceremony' used when disgraced doctors are prevented from continuing to practice. In the cases of the four schools, the staffs worked harder and harder to try to resolve real or imagined problems that a government 'trial might expose'.

The community within the school became more industrious, more caring and more stoical as time passed. The great rush of initial publicity had been traumatic - in the sense of numbing, appalling and simply unthinkable denigration ceremony . . .

The trauma came from the feeling of being encircled and under siege (p. 3).

The heads in each case, and their staff, felt that they were fighting ghosts. While they welcomed an inspection because they felt they had much to be proud of, they also found that "obstacles to the emergence of democratic comprehensives seemed to be subterranean and systematically placed"(p. 19). As the authors explain:

It is crucial to accept that the schools in focus had made some real mistakes, that some things were going wrong and that they had handled the 'politics of events' rather badly. But these schools were all geared to encouraging criticism and making collective efforts to put things right. They were not tuned to receiving criticisms which were supposed to stick like barbed arrow heads. Their processes were intended to correct errors and their attempts to do so were often interpreted as being denial (p. 129).

The Inner London Educational Authority eventually closed Risinghill on the pretext of shifting enrolment. Both Summerhill and Sutton Centre tended to conform to the norm for schools in their areas. Although Sutton Centre has recently received favorable commentary as a school which has achieved 'success against the odds'. (National Commission on Education, 1996) Countesthorpe, as has been described previously, was also able to maintain some vestiges of its innovative past.

With the exception of Sutton Centre where the authors had a more involved presence, the other cases, as they admit, are limited by their exclusive use of secondary sources. In spite of limitations in depth and breadth of each case, Fletcher and his colleagues have provided some useful generalisations that have relevance for the present study. In summary, they describe the evolution of the four schools:

In each case study a head and teaching staff had gone some way towards creating a new kind of secondary school, a democratic comprehensive school. Virtually, at the moment when their successes began really to outshine their failures they were stopped from developing farther. A boundary was set for innovation from within schools. These new schools, which had so recently been held up as shining examples, were subjected to a year or more of hostility. In every case the head removed, as did large a number of teachers. The momentum declined and so did the less tangible quality of staff unity (p.121).

13. Secondary work cultures and educational change

This study by Andy Hargreaves and his colleagues (1992) examines the relationship between work cultures in secondary schools of Ontario and “the actual or anticipated implementation of educational change, in the form of destreaming, within a range of secondary schools settings” (p. i). The study is particularly relevant to the Lord Byron case on two count. Some cases are of new schools and the study deals with how secondary schools deal with change. The cases describe Ontario schools, two of the cases are of new and innovative schools, and one of the schools is Roxborough that, as the subsequent chapters reveal played a significant role in the evolution of Lord Byron. The study identifies school cultures, structures, contexts, leadership and the educational lives and biographies of teachers as important concepts in the success or failure of change.

Perhaps most important is the focus on work cultures of secondary schools as a way to understand change processes. The authors discriminate between the content of culture as

values, beliefs, rituals, and the forms of cultures as patterns of relationships and forms of association (p. 6). Complex organisations like secondary schools may be divided into two or more cultures. This study identifies four distinct cultural forms: individualism occurs where teachers work in physical and psychological isolation; balkanization where teachers are divided into sub-groups that often pursue competing goals; contrived collegiality where managers mandate collaboration through “specific managerial interventions” (p. 7) and a collaborative culture where “teachers offer positive help, support, and advice to each other as well as working and planning together in joint projects” (p. 7). The researchers’ investigations of the attempts of eight schools to respond to the Ontario government’s restructuring initiative concluded that the most reluctant schools tended to be characterised by balkanized cultures. Conversely:

collaborative work cultures in secondary schools create and sustain trust, risk, openness, opportunities to learn, shared language, and common experience that make educational changes less abstract and less threatening to individual members of the school community (p. 215).

The study includes two cases of new and innovative schools. The first, Lester Pearson Secondary School describes a relatively small 850 pupil school that is characterised by high staff morale and collegiality, strong community support, and a co-operative and involved pupil population. This case corroborates other studies which identify the importance of the principal in the change process (Fullan, 1991; Leithwood, 1993). Since the principal of Pearson is a woman, the case’s author, introduces the concept of ‘woman’s leadership’ (Shakeshaft, 1987; 1993) and particularly the “ethic of

caring”(Gilligan, 1982). The principal of Pearson spent a significant amount of time building and sustaining relationships and reinforcing trust through effective delegation and participative decision-making. At the time of writing, the school was in its fourth year. The author suggests that the major challenge for the school board in which Pearson is located will be to find and train an appropriate replacement for the existing principal. This question of succession planning for the innovative principal is a recurring theme (Gold and Miles, 1981 Fletcher et al, 1985; Smith et al, 1987).

The other relevant case is that of Lincoln Secondary School (Hargreaves et al, 1992). Like the Lester Pearson case, this is a new and innovative school. The researchers confirm themes in other studies of new schools: the inordinate effort required; the challenge of creating both structures and cultures (Fullan et al 1972; Gold and Miles, 1981; Smith et al, 1987; Evans, 1983; Anderson and Stiegelbauer, 1990), the pressure of being in the spotlight (Fletcher et al, 1985); the need to maintain professional growth for teachers (Anderson and Stiegelbauer, 1990); the problem of sorting out school goals and directions (Woods, 1979; Gold and Miles, 1990), among others. Lincoln not only attended to these and related issues, it also attempted to respond to government requirements. Its problems were not fewer, but actually greater than established schools. As the authors state, “restructuring of this scale and pace tends to place unacceptable overload on teachers, to foster temptations to try to do everything at once, and to create frustrations when it is realized that this is not possible” (p. 105). The usefulness of the cases in the study to examine new and innovative schools are limited by the rather brief ‘snapshot’ one gets of each school, and the fact that the clear purpose of the study was to examine school work cultures and their relationship to a specific educational change,

destreaming. Hargreaves and his colleagues (1992) recognise the need for greater understanding of dynamics of change and new schools. We urgently need, they declare, “newly theorized understandings of this inherently difficult process” (p.105).

Summary

This summary of cases, when looked at cumulatively, suggests some patterns that have the potential to contribute to ‘theorized understandings’. Every school in this survey, new or established, attempted to redirect the meaning of traditional education in ways that were more egalitarian, democratic and pupil-centred. In some cases the reality did not correspond to the rhetoric (Woods, 1979; Ball, 1981). Each of the ‘new’ schools opened in a spirit of great expectations and notoriety. All advocated a pupil-centred environment, in which the roles, relationships and structures of the school were designed to meet the individual needs of pupils as opposed to the more traditional approach of obliging the pupil to conform to a pre-existing school’s structure and culture. This meaning manifested itself in a variety of ways ranging from ‘open’ classrooms (Miles and Gold, 1981), to interdisciplinary studies (Watts, 1977), individualised timetables (Anderson and Stiegelbauer, 1990), heterogeneous grouping of pupils (Ball, 1981), and “zones of transition” (Hargreaves, 1986).

Over time, however, changing external and internal contexts reaffirmed the more traditional educational purposes such as social mobility (Fletcher et al, 1985), and examination preparation (Evans, 1983), and resulted in the construction of walls where none had existed, (Gold and Miles, 1981; Smith et al, 1987), the sorting and selecting of pupils (Woods, 1979), and reversion to a subject-discipline focus (Ball, 1981; Fletcher,

changes concerning meaning of the school among administrators and teachers (Gold and Miles, 1981; Moon, 1983; Smith et al, 1987).

The impact of external contexts on these schools reveals a dichotomy in perceptions of the purposes of school between the school staffs and their communities. What the educators saw as a 'good' school often clashed with what the community viewed as a 'real' school. In virtually every longitudinal case, the school outpaced its community's ability to understand and assimilate change (Moon, 1983; Fletcher, 1985; Smith et al, 1987). These clashes raised the issue of how decisions about a pupil's education should be made - by professional expertise or by parental participation and direction. Ironically, many newer or innovative schools found their efforts to promote understanding by being open to community involvement led to greater conflict than more closed schools experienced (Fullan et al, 1972; Woods, 1979; Miles and Gold, 1981). The media often publicised this disharmony, and politicians, on occasion, saw opportunities to use local difficulties to contest larger political issues at district, state or national levels (Fletcher et al, 1985).

External pressure, much of it perceived to be unfair by the school staffs, resulted in teachers' retreating to their classrooms, (Gold and Miles, 1981) departments or subject groups (Ball, 1981), or to seek support from unions (Gold and Miles, 1981). The interplay of external and internal contexts over time combined to create a history for each new school which did not exist in year one, but became a powerful influence in five, 10, or 15 years (Sarason, 1972; Louis and Miles, 1990). The 'golden age mythology' described by Louis and Miles (1990) affected attitudes towards innovation as time passed (Smith et al, 1987). Certainly nostalgia for the past negatively affected school

organisation and structures and influenced the course of comprehensivisation and middle school development in the United Kingdom (Woods;1979; Ball, 1981; Moon, 1983; Fletcher et al, 1985; Hargreaves, 1986).

The influence of high profile, visionary leaders also permeated the various cases.

Virtually all new and innovative schools were initiated by dynamic district directors and opened by progressive, dedicated principals or heads (Fletcher et al, 1985; Smith et al, 1987; Hargreaves et al, 1992). The importance of the principal's role is reinforced over and over. The principals were able to initiate dramatic changes, recruited and inspired a 'critical mass' of teachers to share their progressive vision for their school (Fletcher et al, 1985; Smith et al, 1987). Principals who failed to create this 'critical mass' tended to have difficulties (Gold and Miles, 1981). Similarly, leaders who promoted cultures of professional dialogue and informed inquiry had initial success (Fletcher et al, 1985; Smith et al, 1987). The staff tended to look at issues as a collaborative group and pursue school-wide improvement goals. With the onset of adverse reactions from the public the staff tended to turn in upon itself and become less open to its context (Gold and Miles, 1981; Smith et al, 1987). Collaborative cultures became extremely fragile in the face of adversity (Woods 1979; Ball, 1981; Gold and Miles, 1981).

The nature of teachers' work and lives experienced a parallel attrition of innovative enthusiasm. In every case, teachers who supported the innovations worked incredibly hard, in some situations, to the point of exhaustion (Fullan et al, 1972; Moon; 1983; Fletcher, 1985; Hargreaves et al, 1992). Over time in each of the longitudinal cases the combination of community negativity, demographic changes (Smith et al, 1987), an ageing staff (Evans, 1983), and inadequate induction of new teachers to the school

(Evans, 1983; Hargreaves, 1986) resulted in teachers' accepting more traditional cultural norms (Smith et al, 1987) and a resulting attrition of change. In many cases the teachers seemed to be perplexed by community reactions to their innovations and were quite unprepared psychologically or politically to understand or respond to adverse community reactions (Woods, 1979; Gold and Miles, 1981). Perceptions of reality inside the school and outside the school often differed remarkably (Ball, 1981). This ability to understand schools and teachers from the inside out suggests a major strength of case study approaches to research.

On another level, this review of case studies reveals the versatility of the case study. The cases chosen for this review tend to fall into five groups. Woods', (1979) and Ball's (1981) model applied ethnography and the role of the 'inside' researcher, the 'participant observer'. Smith and his colleagues (1987) employ an 'outsiders' perspective. They use an historical approach, combined with an extensive review of relevant documents, an in-depth interviewing schedule, and a series of observatory visits over a number of years. Hargreaves (1986) provides a third approach, an 'inside-out' stance. He combines in-school observation and interviews with a thorough review of the history of British middle schools and, more specifically, the schools in his study. Other studies present a fourth, more eclectic model. They combine quantitative methods with interviews, observation and documentary reviews(Fullan et al, 1972; Louis and Miles, 1989; Anderson and Stiegelbauer, 1990). Finally, both Moon (1983) and Fletcher and his colleagues (1985) offer a more retrospective, historical analysis of schools involved in change, written in some cases by participants. In developing a methodological approach for the Byron study therefore, each case provided insight and understanding, but no case provided a directly replicable methodological model.

Since the events involving Lord Byron transpired between 1970 and 1995, historical methods would be required. To have limited this to a strictly historical analysis however, might have proven interesting, but would have contributed little to ‘theorized understanding’. To this end, I adapted ethnographic methods to extend the historical analysis to not only study the ‘black box’ that was Lord Byron, but more importantly to open the ‘black box’ to examine what was inside. My unique ‘inside-outside’ relationship to Lord Byron over many years presents significant opportunities but also may be seen to be a liability; therefore, special measures were necessary to ensure the study’s reliability. As Ball (1993) explains:

The problems of conceptualizing qualitative research increase when data, and the analysis and interpretation of data, are separated from the social process which generated them. In one respect the solution is a simple one. It is the requirement for methodological rigour that every ethnography be accompanied by a *research biography*, that is, a reflexive account of the conduct of the research which, by drawing on fieldnotes and reflections, recounts the processes, problems, choices, and errors which describe the fieldwork upon which the substantive account is based (p. 46).

The next chapter attempts to fulfil this requirement.

Chapter 2

Research Biography

This thesis is a qualitative case study of the 25 year history of a new and purposefully innovative school, Lord Byron High School, located in Middleton, Ontario, Canada. The longitudinal and retrospective nature of the study, and the complexity of the research questions shaped my choices of methodology. In qualitative research, as Ball (1993) suggests:

Data are a social construct of the research process itself, and not just a study of the ‘natives’ under study. Data are a product of the skills and imagination of the researcher and of the interface between the researcher and the researched . . . Indeed what counts as data, what is seen and unnoticed, what is and is not recorded, will depend on the interests, questions, and relationships that are brought to bear in a particular scene. The research will generate meaning as part of the social life it aims to describe and analyse (pp. 45-46).

Problems arise in qualitative research when the data are separated from the social processes which generated them. Since the researcher is the key methodological instrument in qualitative studies (Woods, 1986; Anderson, 1990), I have adopted Ball’s (1993) suggestion of a research biography to describe the processes used to develop the Lord Byron case study. To this end, I have avoided what Goetz (1988) has called the ‘pseudo-objectivity’ of using the third person in science writing by adopting a first person, ‘researcher-as instrument’ (Ball, 1993, p. 46) stance throughout this and

subsequent chapters. This research biography, therefore, describes the methodological framework and decisions which influenced my data collection, analysis and reporting of this case study of Lord Byron High School.

Lord Byron: as a case study

As Stake (1994) has indicated “Case study is not a methodological choice, but rather a choice of object to be studied” (Stake, 1994, p. 236). A qualitative case study, therefore, is “an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon such as a program, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit” (p. xiv). I predicated my choice of a qualitative case study, as opposed to alternative modes of investigation, such as survey techniques and experimental designs, on a number of factors. Merriam (1988) and others suggests the following guidelines for choosing a design:

1) What is nature of the questions? *What* and *how many* questions are appropriate for experimental designs. *How* and *why* questions are more suitable for a qualitative case study. The questions that direct this study are definitely of the *how* and *why* category.

2) How much control does the researcher have over events and variables?

Experimental designs have greater control over variables, whereas qualitative case studies are more appropriate in situations where the researcher has limited or no control. This lack of control might be seen as a weakness of the case study approach. In an historical study however, a researcher has no influence over events

or variables. Since the 'case' of Lord Byron covers the period 1970 to 1995, a case study approach is clearly more suitable.

3) What is the end product of the study? Does the study attempt to confirm pre-existing hypotheses through experimental or survey methods or does the study propose to generate a theory or theories? Since answers to the research questions for this study require some degree of theory building and generalisation as well as theory testing, a case study model that is useful for both purposes (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1990) is appropriate.

4) Smith (1978) provides a fourth criterion - can a 'bounded system' or integrated system be identified for the study? Is the case specific and is it a functioning specific? "The boundaries and the behaviour patterns of the system are key factors in understanding the case"(Stake, 1994, p.237). A school such as Lord Byron is an identifiable 'bounded system' and therefore clearly fits the definition of a 'case'. "It is an instance drawn from a class" (Merriam, p.10). It was a new, innovative, secondary school, located in an identifiable historical and geographical context.

5) Cronbach (1975) indicates that a case study is different from other research strategies because it requires "interpretation in a context" (p.123). The focus on a single case study requires the researcher to look at it in relationship to its contexts, both internal and external, and to describe the interrelationships and interconnections in an holistic and ecological way. It necessitates a design that provides a depth of analysis and a sensitivity to its various layers of meaning. The only way to understand a school such as Lord Byron is to understand its various

contexts - its pupils, subject departments, immediate community, school district, province, state or nation. Clearly surveys, experiments, and other quantitative designs are limited in their ability to explore the vast complexity of a school in the depth that a qualitative case study can.

As Wilson (1987) explains:

The focus of qualitative data is on ‘meanings’ assigned to an event. Meanings are interpreted by participants in the environment and relate to the context of what occurs in the environment . . . The qualitative paradigm is based on the assumption that it is important to understand situations from the perspective of the participants in the situation . . . it is the focus on the social meanings and the insistence that these meanings can only be examined in the context of individuals interacting that distinguishes the qualitative paradigm from the quantitative paradigm (p.109).

Case studies are used in a wide variety of disciplines and for a variety of purposes. Case studies are basic to medical schools, schools of business and law schools. Most subject disciplines use case studies. It is, therefore difficult to define precisely the term ‘case study’. For purposes of this study, I have been influenced by Merriam’s (1988) discussion of four main types of qualitative case studies that are commonly used in educational research.

- *Ethnographic case studies* focus on culture and are concerned with a sociocultural analysis of the unit of study. Hammersley and Atkinson (1990) suggest that the

ethnographic approach is versatile because it can contribute to both the development and the testing of theory. At the same time, it is sufficiently flexible so that ideas can be quickly tried out, and if promising, followed up or abandoned. Thus it limits the need for pre-field work because the methodology can be changed as the case proceeds. Perhaps more importantly, its use of multiple sources of data removes over-dependence on one source. The study of a school as a social institution requires knowledge of the people involved, their behaviour, interactions, beliefs, values and motivations. It would, as Woods (1986) stated, need insights from “within the group, and from within the perspectives of the group’s members. It is their meaning and interpretations that count” (p. 4). This study is in large measure based upon the recollections and perceptions of the people who lived through Lord Byron’s ‘attrition of change’. While they viewed it from the perspectives of different eras, roles and professional life stages, collectively they describe the complex interplay of various social forces, internal and external to the school. Unlike conventional ethnographic studies, however, which through participant observation and on-site observations document contemporary events, Byron’s events were in the past and the methodological options were limited.

- *Historical case studies* use techniques common to historiography such as the use of primary and secondary sources and the employment of oral histories. To understand the present, the researcher needs to know the past. A weakness of many case studies is their ahistorical approach that limits them to the ‘here and now’ (Goodson and Anstead, 1993, p. 25). The American historian Nevin (1962) has said: “History enables bewildered bodies of human beings to grasp their relationship with the past, and helps chart on general lines the immediate forward course” (p.14). The sheer

weight of 25 years of events at times threatened to limit this study to an interesting historical narrative. At the same time, the ethnographic evidence from my interviews and the number of issues it raised could easily have led to a purely analytical discussion of the constructs introduced in Chapter Three and obscured the significance of Byron's historical context. My challenge in this study, therefore, was to blend both the historical and ethnographic approaches to determine patterns in the evolution of the school that might be generalised, or at least instructive to other new and evolving situations.

- *Psychological case studies* are concerned with a detailed study of the individual “as a way to investigate some aspect of human behavior” (Merriam, 1988, p. 25). This type of case is not appropriate for this research although the motives and actions of key individuals in the study are certainly worthy of in-depth investigation and commentary. My own biography, however, plays an important role in this study for two reasons. First, over its 25 year history, I was, at various times, department head, vice principal, and supervising superintendent at Lord Byron, and throughout the years, an interested and often involved observer of the Lord Byron scene. Second, Ball (1993) makes the point that in ethnographic research, the researcher himself is “the primary research tool” (p. 32). I develop this personal relationship with the school and this study in more detail throughout the thesis.
- *Sociological case studies* deal with demographics, social life, the community, social institutions and the roles that people play in them. While the emphasis in the Byron study is not overtly sociological, a study of the depth and complexity of the sort adopted in this thesis requires considerable investigation of these sociological topics

and contexts. Certainly the role of the community, shifting demographics, and conflicting role definitions affected the course of Byron's evolution.

Stenhouse (1985), however, suggests that there are two major traditions of case study which appear to have influenced educational research - the historical and ethnographic. While they differ in such substantive ways as data sources, methodological orientation, and focus, they both deal with events and situations embedded in time: "they are both concerned with the past . . . and both offer thick descriptions, that is representations whose virtue is verisimilitude as opposed to abstract analyses" (p. 53). Hammersley (1992) supports this view, and suggests further that both traditions document perspectives of people who are involved in the events of the study 'in their own terms'. This combination of the two traditions overcomes the concern that historical studies tend to be atheoretical and that ethnographic studies are often "snapshots frozen in time" (Woods, 1988, p. 102). Both Hammersley and Woods suggest a further tie to life history studies. Woods (1985, p. 68) quotes Goodson's (1981) comment that:

Life history investigations set against the background of evolutionary patterns of schooling and teaching should provide an antidote to the depersonalised ahistorical accounts to which we have become accustomed. Through life history, we gain insight into individuals coming to terms with imperatives in social structure . . . (p. 74).

The methodologies utilised in this study, therefore, combine strategies from all three traditions of history, ethnography and life history.

Methodological strategies

Historians typically combine primary sources with secondary sources to arrive at interpretations of events. Primary sources are usually first person accounts by people who have witnessed events, whereas secondary sources are the result of a second person(s) account of events derived from primary and other secondary sources. In the Byron case there are no secondary accounts. In fact, there are very few articles or monographs related to Byron or the South Board of which Byron was a part. The most common sources of data in historical research in general and Lord Byron in particular are documents. These can range from formal minutes of meetings to personal letters to school yearbooks, reports, studies, and newspaper accounts. Oral histories derived from conversations or interviews are another useful resource if the events are not too far in the past. The researcher must be particularly careful to differentiate between intentional documents which are produced for public consumption and unintentional ones which are for personal use (Hargreaves, 1986). Even in private documents it is useful to probe the author's intent. Quantitative data such as school attendance records, achievement scores, teacher attendance, teachers ages, experience, gender and other demographic data can be useful. Artefacts provide a fourth source of primary information. These might include yearbooks, photographs, drawings, building plans and trophies or awards. Regardless of the sources, the historian, like the ethnographic researcher, plays a very large part in the determination of what is and is not factual. As Nevins (1962) states:

Memoirs, letters, diaries, public documents, newspapers, provide for the greater part of modern history a wealth of vivid detail. Moreover, a great deal of vivid detail is usually inherent in the situation itself and in the environment, social and

physical - detail of the most authentic kind. The truly imaginative historian perceives the authentic detail, his more prosaic fellow does not (p. 6).

To reconstruct the Byron case from a historical perspective I, therefore, reviewed the available relevant historical documents, quantitative data and artefacts of the school, the school district, and, to a limited extent, the province.

Goodson and Anstead (1993) suggest that collective memories which surface in interviews may only be the rehearsed responses of people who have accepted the definitions of reality developed by people in superior roles in the organisation. In their historical study of Beale Technical School in Ontario, Goodson and Anstead found people presenting a picture of school days and individuals in a very positive light as though they had rehearsed it before the interview. With probing, the darker side of these 'happy' days and remembered individuals began to emerge. This 'other' memory that they suggest will often emerge, they call "dissident memory", where "the 'truth' begins to deviate from the version of events that is conventionally accepted, worked for and normally recounted" (p. 221). I therefore attempted to tap the 'collective' and 'dissident' memories of the people involved in the Lord Byron experience.

In ethnographic studies, the most used methodological strategy is that of 'participant observation'. The researcher attempts to 'fit in' with the group which he or she is attempting to study, and through observations, conversations, and informal interviews, develops a picture of the group's culture from the perspective of the participants. Ball's (1981) and Woods' (1979) studies described in the previous chapter are useful examples of this approach. In situations where this tactic is difficult or impossible, such as in

historical studies, the interview provides a useful alternative for the collection of ethnographic data.

Much has been written on the topic of interviews and interviewing. At one extreme interviews can be so tightly structured that they are little more than interactive questionnaires. At the other extreme, an interview can be so non-directive that it is more akin to a therapy session than a data gathering strategy. Similarly advice on questioning, responding, listening, and relating to the person interviewed suggests that there is no one approach. Advice on interviewing seems to depend on the author's intellectual tradition. Watts and Ebbut (1987) agree that there is little consensus on what constitutes an interview. Available definitions of the interview process, therefore, tend to be rather broad. Powney and Watts (1987) provide this representative definition - "a conversation initiated by an interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research relevant information, and focused by him/her on content specified by research objectives . . ." (p. 6). In line with this definition, I conducted over 55 individual interviews (see Appendix 1) and three group interviews to achieve the ethnographic goal of delving into the culture and meaning of Lord Byron High School as it evolved over time. Group interviews have the advantage of promoting discussion "so that a wide range of responses can be collected" (Watts and Ebbutt, 1987, p. 32). They also provide a forum to bring together people with widely divergent points of view. Group strategies do not, however, allow for personal revelations and can be dominated by more vocal individuals. The group interviews I conducted proved to be a source of considerable data and insight. Individuals in all three groups built on participants' comments to recall long forgotten incidents and perceptions. The discussion with the Lord Byron women's group in

particular, opened avenues of investigation I had scarcely contemplated when this project was initiated.

The third methodological tradition which I employed was life history. As Goodson (1992) states: “the crucial focus for life history work is to locate the teacher’s own life story alongside a broader contextual analysis . . . (p. 6)”. Life stories are the stories we tell about ourselves; life history is a collaborative effort in which individual life stories are located within an historical context. In each interview I conducted, therefore, I questioned respondents about how their Byron experience fitted into their life history. In addition, my own professional ‘life story’ and its relationship to the Byron case is a relevant source of data.

I was personally involved, either as a teacher or administrator, in most of the events described in this study. My own recollections, therefore, provide another source of data, as well as a control on the veracity of other data sources. The discussion which follows, elaborates the three main methodological strategies mentioned as well as my own reminiscences. For each I will describe the advantages, the limitations, and outline how I handled them in this particular case.

Documentary evidence

Documents, unlike interviews and participant observation, provide an unobtrusive and stable source of data. Since the documents used in this study were produced for other purposes, they contribute a ready-made and easily accessible source of information about the Lord Byron case. Merriam (1988) also suggests that documentary data “are

particularly good sources for qualitative case studies because they can ground an investigation in the context of the problem being investigated” (p. 109). More significantly, for a study such as this which tries to reconstruct 25 years of history, documents are often the only available source of evidence on some issues.

To reconstruct the history of Lord Byron, I sought documentary evidence from the province of Ontario, the South school district, and the school. In Canada, education is almost exclusively a provincial responsibility, therefore, primary and secondary sources as well as my own recollections and those of the people I interviewed provided a reasonably comprehensive picture of Ontario’s educational history for the past 40 years. In addition to secondary sources noted in the bibliography, the public sources are of four types: the legislated acts which provide the legal basis and direction for schools; the regulations which direct school officials in the implementation of legislation; government guidelines which describe the mandated school structures such as diploma requirements and curriculum, and Ministry memoranda which were issued from time to time to provide guidance to school officials. Some memoranda could be quite directive while others were merely advisory. These were often issued in response to public issues which required political action. In addition to these ‘intentional’ public records, I also consulted newspaper accounts related to important events and controversies, and scholarly commentaries. These printed sources were augmented and complemented by the stated memories of each of my interview respondents, as well as my own recollections as an active participant at the provincial level.

The public documents of the South Board of Education are conveniently archived chronologically. They contain the minutes of all Board meetings going back to its origins

in 1969, long range plans for the district, administrative reports to the Board, presentations by public delegations, lists of promotions, transfers, budget information, enrolment reports as well as Ministry legislation, memoranda and correspondence to the Board. All Board policies and procedures are catalogued, dated and tracked. I also had access to detailed pupil enrolment information, special education statistics, staff allocation information, transfers, promotions and retirements. In addition, building plans, modifications, budgets, and financial information are also available. My interview respondents contributed 'inside' information on Board events, personnel, and politics. Moreover, I was appointed to a district role in 1978 and attended virtually every Board meeting until August of 1993. I was, therefore, privy to inside information and personally involved in most major issues and events in the Board. These three sources provided a fairly thorough picture of the South Board in the period under study.

Lord Byron provided me with a very rich source of documentary evidence for the period 1970 to 1978. After 1978, however, the school kept no accessible records. No one seemed to know what happened to these documents. Secretaries speculated that most archival materials were discarded to provide space in filing cabinets. The only reason that documents from the early years survived was that someone had stored them in boxes in a remote cupboard. As well, one of the former principals, Graham Clark, had kept a file of materials from his stay at Lord Byron. These data included school aims and objectives, evaluation reports, staff lists, and curriculum outlines (see Historical Sources). The most important source for the early years was a comprehensive report on the school after its first five years. I was also able to find a number of staff lists from different years. These lists enabled me to trace staff members, determine demographic data, and construct an

interview schedule. The most important sources, however, were the recollections of the participants in the school and my own memories, particularly of the early years.

I identified a number of core documents at each level (province, district and school) and subjected them to a content analysis according to a conceptual framework which combined chronology with the analytical themes described in detail in Chapter Three. Advantages of developing a conceptual framework for documentary analysis were the opportunities to:

- contribute to a coherent and balanced representation of the case study;
- contribute to an analysis and synthesis of the evidence which is more grounded in the context;
- provide a structured account of the case to check with other sources the authenticity of the documents and accuracy or worth of information that the documents contain.

As the author of many official documents, I was well aware of their limitations. They are often incomplete and what they do not say can often be more important than what they do. The inert words do not convey the politics, passions, and intrigues which surrounded many of the documents. Certainly the written records miss the drama which surrounded many of the Board meetings that I witnessed, and in which I participated. Another limitation is the lack of representativeness of the documents. If one were to judge public attitudes towards education in South based on public delegations then one would

conclude that people were very unhappy. In most cases the delegations were individuals who were concerned about and affected by specific issues, and did not represent the general satisfaction of the majority of parents regarding the quality of education provided by the South Board of Education (South Effective Schools Parent Questionnaire, 1993).

Documents can often come in forms that researchers do not understand. For example, budgets, provincial grants and local taxation formulae can be confusing to the uninitiated. My own experience minimised this problem, and my access to key Board officials enabled me to clarify any documents I found perplexing. Perhaps the greatest problem in using documents, official or unofficial, is to determine their accuracy and authenticity. Once again, my experience was useful. For most of the documents used in this study, I was aware of their context and the circumstances which led to their creation. For example, the 1975 evaluation of Lord Byron is a comprehensive look at the school by both insiders and outsiders. I was part of the inside committee, and negotiated the final report with the external committee. This involvement provides me with an understanding of the document's origins, reasons for being written, and insight into circumstances leading up to its production. Similarly, I have written and received statements of school aims and objectives and Principal's Manager's Letters (or goal statements) and written evaluation reports on schools similar to the documents in the Lord Byron collection. These reports often tend to be more positive and encouraging than reality might suggest. Principals sometimes focus on achievable goals to ensure success, and supervisors tend to mute criticism to maintain relationships and appear to be supportive. These documents, therefore, are useful to describe the issues of the day, but must be analysed and critiqued in conjunction with other documentary and oral history sources to get behind the words to their deeper meaning.

The interview

The documents provided a useful description of circumstances surrounding events, and changing policies and structures which affected the school, but they did not allow for an in-depth understanding of the how and why questions raised by the case. Documents, especially 'intentional' ones, are silent on shifting school contexts, and cultures, nor do they contribute answers as to how the organisation actually functioned, how leaders related in practice to staff, or why and how the Byron staff responded to different situations. A case of this nature which

. . . focuses on meaning in context, requires a data collection instrument sensitive to underlying meaning when gathering and interpreting data. Humans are best suited for this task and best when using methods that make use of human sensibilities such as interviewing, observing, and analysing (Merriam (1988, p.3).

To augment the documentary sources, therefore, as well as to pursue the ethnographic aspects of the Lord Byron case I initiated an extensive interview schedule with present and former Lord Byron staff members and selected key informants external to the school, but familiar with the Lord Byron case.

Advantages of interviewing as a research method

Since events under study in the Lord Byron case were in the past and impossible to replicate, and direct observation of people's behaviours and reactions was out of the question, the interview was the most logical and useful data gathering methodology. On a pragmatic level, interviews allowed me to study a relatively large number of people in a limited amount of time. As Dexter (1970) has stated, interviewing "is the preferred tactic of data collection when . . . it will be *better data* or *more data* or data *at least cost* than other tactics" (p.11). Since the data were 'for the record' because they were audio-taped, they were also *hard data* - a permanent record of events and individual observations.

Interviews are very adaptable. Successful interviews require the interviewer and respondent to develop mutual understandings which help to prevent the interviewer from misdescribing the respondent's perspectives. This creates opportunities to probe beyond surface issues to inquire into the background of situations, multiple contexts, not just the immediate situation, and gain insight into the biographies of respondents (Denscombe, 1983). Equally important, the interviewer can explore the participant's motives, feelings and emotions. From the respondent's point of view, the interview allows some control over the process. "They can go some way towards eliciting involvement and participation, and hence more co-operation from the staff" (p. 111). While the interview strategy provided an important vehicle for my data collection, it was not without problems and challenges which had to be attended to as my study of Lord Byron progressed.

Challenges of using interviews

While the reciprocity between interviewer and respondent is desirable and efficacious, the potential for the subject to control the interview raises a significant challenge to effective interviewing - how does the researcher know that the respondent is telling the truth?

Fleming (1986) argues that the major source of error in interviewing is the social action of the interview itself. Bell and her colleagues (1984) refer to the problem of the 'response effect' in which distortion arises due to:

- the desire of respondents to please the interviewer so that the respondent's opinion will be well received;
- antagonism developing between the interviewer and the respondent;
- the interviewer seeking answers to support preconceived notions;
- the respondent giving 'best image' answers in situations where questions may require them to give answers about their own personal conduct or ideas. Respondents may, for example, claim a lack of time or expertise, or refer the interviewer to another source.

Denscombe (1983) suggests that people in positions of responsibility often employ 'mystification' either to avoid answers or to deflect questions. Where a subject is sceptical of researchers or suspicious of their motives, it is often politic to give the most positive interpretation. Other sources of distortion occur when the respondent did not observe the events under discussion or cannot remember the events. Similarly, deception can occur when the respondent reports as accurately as possible but is psychologically

unable to recall or discuss uncomfortable issues. The most obvious source of misinformation results when the respondent, for personal or political reasons, purposely misleads the interviewer. Whyte (1982) suggests that the researcher has four 'negative checks' to detect distortion. "If the account just doesn't seem plausible, we are justified in suspecting distortion" (p. 116). Second is the researcher's knowledge of the reliability or unreliability of the respondent. A third aid is the interviewer's knowledge of the respondent's mental state. Is the respondent under pressure, experiencing ill health, antagonistic towards people in perceived positions of authority? Whyte suggests that the best method is to compare one person's account with those of others through cross-checking or by follow-up interviews. These are considerations in dealing with the second challenge of the interview as a case study methodology - construction of an interview schedule.

In developing an interview schedule which provides sufficient data to describe and analyse a case effectively, the researcher must not only give thought to the areas for investigation, the nature and wording of questions, but also issues of time, place, roles and relationships. As Ball (1983) points out, schools have their own 'temporal phenomenology' that the interviewer must respect. Similarly, the location of the interview can have a bearing on the result. Is the respondent comfortable in the setting or threatened by the environment? Can the interview be conducted uninterrupted and in a confidential situation? What official and unofficial roles do people hold? How do they see the role of the researcher? Do they, for example, see the interviewer as an agent of the principal (head teacher) or senior management? Can the interviewer establish a relationship characterised by trust, curiosity and unaffectedness (Woods, 1986) or is he or she viewed with suspicion and guardedness? The development of an interview schedule,

therefore, requires answers to the question of how, where, who, when and how long to interview.

While the case study approach does not use sampling across cases it does sample within the case. Ball (1993) suggests that 'naturalistic sampling' is appropriate in qualitative work. As he states: "I use the term 'naturalistic sampling' . . . to refer to the dispersal of the researcher's time and energy in the organisation by *places, persons, and times*" (p. 38).

Fleming (1986) has challenged the validity of interpretations based upon interview data. He argues that interviews do not say what 'really' happened because of either the 'response effect' or through the use of language codes with hidden meanings - we "do things with words" (p. 548). He also suggests that interpretation of events based on interviews are not reliable because they do not inform but perform a version of reality. Individual accounts will tend to be different depending on the audience. Reality is not based on the respondents' perceptions but rather on the social context in which it is presented. He suggests further that in social situations, like an interview, the respondents' actions are moral actions in which they defend the values, interest, and norms of the group(s) they represent. In other words, a teacher will present the 'party line' of teachers in a formal interview situation. He suggests that interviewers are merely tourists taken on a tour of what is of interest by the tour director, the respondent. The normal, mundane everyday activities are lost in the exchange.

Others have suggested that interviewers may only record verbal communication, and leave out non-verbal body language and tone of voice. Hull (1985) has referred to

interviews as “poems” or “fictions” which provide little substance upon which to build an interpretation of events or phenomena. A more subtle criticism of the interview method is that the process itself draws attention to the topic in question, and by alerting interviewees, taints the outcome of any results that follow, particularly if interviewees are interviewed several times (Giles C., personal communication, 1996). To counteract some of these problems, Fleming suggests that the “analysis of the account should . . . examine how the account is constructed/organised to accomplish and create its setting . . .” (p. 551). Methodologically, he recommends that to study students’ behaviour (and one would presume teachers’ behaviour), “. . . we will have to become members of those settings if we are to be party to the observability of the activities which make them what they are” (p. 561). His advocacy of the insider’s doctrine as a more effective way to understand and analyse social phenomena conflicts with the view that an unbiased outsider who is unprejudiced by membership in the groups under study can provide a more credible picture of reality.

Insider and outsider

The insider’s doctrine according to Merton (1970), stated simply, is that “you have to be one to understand one” (p. 15). An insider, according to this view has a “monopolistic or privileged access to knowledge,” and an outsider is “wholly excluded from it, by virtue of one’s group membership or social position”. This view suggests that outsiders have not been socialised in the group and “cannot have the direct, intuitive sensitivity that alone makes empathetic understanding possible” (p. 15). Conversely, ‘outsiders’ hold that “knowledge about groups, unprejudiced by membership in them, is accessible only to the outsider” (p. 31). McNamara (1980) initiated a spirited debate between himself and

Hammersley when he described the ‘outsider’s arrogance’ with specific reference to classroom research. McNamara argues that outsiders who observe classrooms do so selectively and fail to comprehend the complexity of the situation. He suggests that outsiders to the classroom “invariably have a message for us; they have discovered situations in the classroom that need to be rectified . . . This might be possible to take if it were not so often coupled with an arrogant or patronising manner and naive view of classrooms and the problems faced by practising teachers” (p. 115). In his response, Hammersley (1981) contends that the term ‘insider’ is misleading because “it implies that those being studied constitute a single homogeneous group” (p. 169). He challenges McNamara’s view that the ‘outsider’s’ analyses are often invalid and of little use to teachers by asserting that carefully constructed research which employs observation in different contexts, and interviews with all types of participants can deal with threats to validity claimed by the insider’s doctrine. This debate highlights the insider’s advantage of understanding the group from the inside and therefore the complexity of the situation. The outsider, however, can theoretically view the situation somewhat dispassionately, unaffected by the internal culture and micro-politics. As Merton (1970) suggests, neither has an exclusive claim to certainty. Both roles bring advantages and disadvantages which, as Hammersley (1981) points out, the researcher must anticipate and accommodate.

This issue has particular relevance in my relationship to the Lord Byron study. I played many different roles in my association with Lord Byron High School. At various times, I was a very active and accepted ‘insider’. In a sense, I was a participant observer, but not a ‘participant observer’ in the research sense of someone who interacts, takes careful fieldnotes, and conducts unstructured interviews to arrive at some understanding of the

school's culture. My observations based on participation are in hindsight. Two studies described in Chapter One (Woods, 1979; Ball, 1981) provide examples of 'participant observation' and the 'insider's' perspective. In each case, the researcher became part of the school staff for short periods of time in order to understand the dynamics of the school under study. As an 'insider' and original member of the Lord Byron staff, I had relatively easy entry into the school and access to interview subjects. Since I had shared the Byron experience, particularly in the early years, I was seen by many as part of the Byron alumni, and therefore perceived to have an insider's understanding of what the school was about.

Other studies described previously were conducted by researchers who operated from the 'outside' through interviews, questionnaires, and historical research (Gold and Miles 1981; Smith et al, 1987; Goodson and Anstead, 1993). In recent times, I have been very much on the outside of Lord Byron looking in - interested, but involved only tangentially. My recent relationship with the school has, however, been focused on this particular project. My challenge as a researcher, therefore was to combine the advantages of my unique 'inside-outside' perspectives while minimising their potential disadvantages.

Sarason (1972) makes the point that those who create settings are action people "for whom the process is a personal, or a political, or social affair far more than it is a conceptual one" (p. 183). This creates a problem in that "the hidden assumptions remain hidden, the obvious is not perceived, and the universe of alternative explanations is barely recognised" (p. 183). Conversely those at home in the world of ideas "have never experienced the creation of a setting" (p.183). He continues the comparison:

In the case of the creation of settings the men of action know that it is a fantastically complicated affair, more complicated than they ever imagined for reasons they never anticipated, and that men of ideas and theory know neither the game nor the score. The men of ideas and theory know that most settings go seriously astray, that men of action are devoid of the 'right' ideas, and that the major task is how to wed practice to theory (p. 183).

Effective researchers recognise the complexity of the creation of new settings but are also shrewd empathetic observers, who can provide rich insights for the person of 'action'.

My challenge was to blend the two orientations to develop the Byron case. Over the past 35 years, I have operated in both spheres, although, until the past three years, I was paid to be a 'person of action'. In terms of this research project therefore, I understand both sides of Sarason's equation, the world of action and the world of theory. I therefore sought a third orientation, one which is based on observation and understanding. My inside-outside relationship to Lord Byron High School, however, does raise the question of the researcher's relationship to the case and the data gathered.

It is becoming increasingly accepted in the research community that the researcher's subjectivity operates during a research project. Peshkin (1988) contends that "researchers, notwithstanding their use quantitative or qualitative methods, their research problem, or their reputation for personal integrity, should systematically identify their subjectivity throughout the course of the research (p. 17). Woods (1986) argues that positivistic approaches which attempt to eliminate the effects of the researcher from the data and naturalistic qualitative methods in which the researcher becomes "a neutral vessel of cultural experience" (p. 14) are equally futile. His resolution is for the

researcher “to recognise the reflexive character of social research: that is, to recognise that we are part of the social world we study” (p.14). Hammersley (1983) suggests that there are two implications of reflexivity. First he indicates that the researcher’s own activities should be open to analysis in the same way as those of other participants in the study. He further recommends that the researcher has an obligation “to make himself aware of the decisions he is taking and the motives that underlay those decisions” (p. 3). Hammersley also suggests that the activities of the researcher should be included in the research report. While the advice is useful, “there are few guidelines for how one goes about doing it, especially in a way that both is reflexive and, yet, notes the limits of self-reflexivity” (Lather, 1993). Some (Woods, 1986; Ball, 1993) suggest making the reader aware of factors which affect one’s outlook whereas Peshkin (1988) advocates ‘taming’ these tendencies. My own predilection is to provide sufficient detail of my personal involvement as a researcher and participant in the Lord Byron case to assist the reader to decide on its usefulness, while avoiding becoming too self indulgent. This research biography is my effort to meet Hammersley’s first two requirements. The biographical details which intersperse the historical chapters that follow allow for Hammersley’s third requirement.

Developing an interview schedule

The decision to use the interview as my primary data gathering instrument necessitated the following decisions: whom should I interview? what interview style should I use? what questions would I ask? should I provide the questions in advance? how should I record the interview? how should it be analysed and reported?

- Who should be interviewed?

To answer these questions, I decided to ‘cast my net’ as widely as possible while ensuring that my total number was manageable. I limited my interviews to past and present staff members of Lord Byron, as well as individuals in the South system who had broad knowledge of the Byron story. It would have been difficult to include parents and pupils for reasons of access and manageability. To find and to interview a reasonable sample of parents and pupils, who represented the three decades, were beyond my capacity as a single researcher. Since many of the staff members I interviewed were parents in the Byron community, they were able to reflect some aspects of the community’s perspective. For a number of years I was also actively involved in the community and aware of its views and concerns about the school. Issues which the school failed to resolve invariably came to me to unravel. While useful, these data are limited in their representativeness of community views. The pupil perspective in this study is derived from the teacher interviews, which is also a limitation of the study. Once the decisions on inclusion had been made, I had to consider who to interview.

There have been hundreds of staff members who have contributed to Lord Byron over the years. It was clearly impossible to interview all, or even most, and as Hammersley and Atkinson (1990) have stated: “One cannot bias the fieldwork by talking only with people one finds most congenial or politically sympathetic: one cannot choose one’s informants on the same basis as one chooses friends . . .” (p. 84). I therefore selected a sample of respondents from among staff members from three different eras.

Honigman (1982) describes probability sampling as a method to obtain a sample which “comes close to creating a miniature, unbiased replica or cross-section of the sampled phenomena” (p. 85). To this end I selected staff lists for Lord Byron from 1975, 1984 and 1993. These alphabetical lists include teachers, administrators, teacher aides and secretaries. Since the staffs in 1975 and 1993 were smaller, I chose every third person on the list to be an interview respondent. From the 1984 list, I chose every fourth name. This provided me with a minimum of 15 subjects in each of the three years. If any employee group was underrepresented by this process, I added to the list. In the few cases where I could not find the potential respondents because they had moved, I chose the next person on the list. Although this was not a random sample in the statistical sense, it was what Ball (1984) would call “naturalistic coverage” (p.75) because it approximated to the diversity of people who were involved in Byron over the years. Approximately one third of each staff were women and the sample reflects this.

Honigman also describes non-probability or judgmental sampling in which the researcher uses his “prior knowledge of the universe to draw representatives from it who possess distinctive qualifications” (p.80). All principals, therefore, were interviewed in depth, with one exception. The principal identified in Chapter Four as Graham Clark had a stroke during the study which rendered him virtually speechless before I had the opportunity to interview him. Since my office as a superintendent was next door to his for eight years, we had talked many times about his Byron years. These informal conversations, I felt, helped to give me a reasonably good insight into the challenges he faced at Lord Byron. I also contacted senior system administrators who had expert information related to the politics of the South Board and the province.

In addition, I conducted three group interviews. I was invited to a meeting of the Lord Byron Women's Group. They spent over four hours responding to my prepared questions and discussing their experiences at Lord Byron. All of the eight women in attendance are leaders in South or other school systems. They have been meeting periodically since 1975 and supporting each others' professional aspirations. They provided a unique and insightful perspective on Byron and particularly women's leadership. The second group interview was with six retired principals, five of whom were teachers in other schools in the system during Byron's early years and who had progressed through the system over time. The sixth principal was the principal of Byron's neighbouring school Roxborough during Byron's first 10 years. Interestingly, three of the principals interviewed had at various times in the 25 years under study been the principal of Roxborough and knew Byron from the perspective of the 'school-down-the-road' and its community. They contributed knowledge about perceptions of Byron in the South system and its impact upon other schools. I also met with two former superintendents, one of whom had been the supervising administrator for Byron in the 1970s. They were able to offer information about the early years of the South Board and particularly the character and actions of the first Chief Executive Officer of the South Board who promoted the idea of Byron as an innovative school.

In September 1995, a close friend was appointed principal of Lord Byron High School. It is his practice to undertake an extensive entry process which involves interviewing staff members to acquire insight into the school's culture. He agreed to include a number of my questions with his. Since I had completed much of the first draft of this report, it proved an ideal opportunity to reassess conclusions I had drawn as a result of my previous research. I interviewed him for an entire morning. While his findings did not

require a quantum shift in the conclusions that I had developed, they did provide more specific detail on Byron in 1995, as well as reassurance that my interpretations of the Byron experience were still relevant and supportable at that point.

In interviewing school and system leaders, I was aware of the ‘hierarchy of credibility’ (Goodson and Anstead, 1993) and made every effort to balance principals’ perspectives with insights of staff members. What was interesting, but not surprising considering the character of all the principals, was their candour. Since I used similar interview questions for all groups and individuals I found that their recollections were generally corroborated by other staff members. I did not sense any effort to ‘clean-up’ the past. Perhaps my intimate knowledge of events, and the people involved, proved to be a useful authenticity check. When one reviews the list of respondents (see Appendix 1), a high percentage have held or presently hold positions of responsibility. At first glance, the total population interviewed looks somewhat unrepresentative of classroom teachers. Since this is a 25 year study, people’s circumstances have changed. A very high percentage of staff members who were on the staff of Lord Byron in its early years, both men and women, have since achieved positions of responsibility. Most of the respondents were teachers when they were at Lord Byron but were subsequently promoted. For this reason, I have identified the respondent’s position when they were at Lord Byron and their present situation.

Virtually all of the interview respondents have been my colleagues at one time or another. Some are close friends, others acquaintances, and in a few cases, the interview was our first meeting. For each person I interviewed, the dynamic was different. For example, Wesley Walters, whom I interviewed at length, was at one time a department chair with

me at Byron. Later as principal of another school in South, he reported to me as his superior. We are also friends of long standing and at one time owned a farm together and watched our children become close friends. We share a mutual trust and regard, which I am sure enabled me to get greater insight into his very difficult tenure as principal than another researcher might. At the same time, it is entirely possible that my relationship with him may have affected my analysis of his data. In this and similar encounters, I therefore, took particular care to 'tame' my subjectivity and 'ground' my analysis in the evidence presented.

My in-depth knowledge of the school system, and in most cases, the people interviewed, also proved useful in ensuring accuracy and veracity. I was able to ask more probing supplementary questions than a researcher with a less extensive background in the system. My former position in the system also gave me easy entry into schools and access to people, and the co-operation of their supervisors. For the most part, my role in the system and personal relationship with respondents was helpful. In general, I did not experience the difficulties reported by outside researchers (Ball, 1984, Hammersley, 1984; Hargreaves, 1987; Burgess, 1987) related to entry to settings, access to subjects and building rapport. Because of my impending retirement, I was not perceived to represent anyone other than myself. I assured confidentiality and explained that I would only use pseudonyms. References in the body of this thesis to interviews, therefore, use only initials and the date of the interview. The fact that the intended readers were in the United Kingdom also proved reassuring to the less trusting. Most people were open and candid, perhaps because the events under study were in the past. In a very few cases, however, I sensed rather guarded responses because I was still seen in the role which I held before I left the South Board. One person, who I have known for many years,

refused to have his comments taped. I know him to be a very cautious person and mistrustful of management. A few respondents also tended to see me as a conduit to the system about inequities or system deficiencies. This is not a unique experience for researchers (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1990).

Since my history with each person was different, it is difficult to generalise about my approach to developing relationships. In most cases, the respondent was a colleague of long standing and my usual approach was to build on our past relationship. I would often recall positive and humorous events in which we had participated to 'break the ice,' and at various times in the course of the interview, shared personal experiences and reminiscences. Self disclosure by the researcher can, on occasion model openness and frankness for respondents (Everhart, 1977; Bertaux, 1981; Lather, 1986; Measor and Sikes, 1992). At the same time, I tried to be sufficiently goal directed and business-like to accomplish my purposes and not waste people's time. The most revealing interviews resulted from colleagues with whom I had built a trusting relationship over the years. I could pursue difficult questions and expect candid and well thought out answers. The interview seemed more like a social occasion. In situations where I had not built such a relationship the process tended to be more formal and less spontaneous.

On balance, however, my close association with the South school system and most of the respondents proved very productive. No one refused to be interviewed, and only one person refused to be taped. Most interviews consumed well over one hour and opened avenues of analysis I had not even considered when I first initiated this project. In many instances, people brought me artefacts, documents, yearbooks and other helpful information. They also suggested avenues for further investigation. My sense was that

these people who had expended tremendous intellectual and psychic energy to ensure the Byron experiment succeeded, were anxious that in some way I record the Byron story as accurately and rigorously as possible. Many respondents congratulated me on the project and hoped that the experience they had shared at Byron would be of help to others.

- Types of interview

Cohen and Manion (1989) identify four distinctive types of interview:

- the structured interview,
- the unstructured interview,
- the non-directive interview,
- the focused interview.

Each of the four types represents a “continuum of formality” (Bell, 1987, p. 71) - from a closed to a more open style of interviewing. Each has advantages and disadvantages with regard to coverage of content and spontaneity of responses. The more highly structured the interview the more closely it conforms to the interviewer’s agenda and the less opportunity is available for respondent initiative. My approach was initially influenced by the quality and quantity of the international change literature which has proliferated in the past 20 years. The study of a new and innovative school gave me the opportunity to test theories (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983) on change developed through my own work in the change field (Stoll and Fink, 1996) and that of colleagues (Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves, 1994; Lieberman, 1995). In addition, a substantial body of literature has accumulated on topics like school purpose, structure, culture, leadership, context and teachers’ work and their lives (see Chapter Three). These topics not only provided a

useful structure for the interview but also a convenient way to organise and analyse the data.

I developed a preliminary set of questions which I used to interview three associates who had spent time as staff members at Lord Byron. I asked them to critique the questions, from the point of view of clarity and intelligibility, and my interviewing technique. From these trials, I reworded a number of questions and arrived at the schedule in Appendix Two. I also provided more opportunity for spontaneity by reducing the number of scripted questions and initiating more probes. Each of the people with whom I tested the process felt that they would have provided more useful data if they had an opportunity to prepare their answers in advance. I, therefore, provided the structured questions one week before the scheduled interview to enable respondents to do some homework to recapture the past. One week gave people the time to prepare, but not so much time that they forgot about the exercise. Since the topics often required people to think about long forgotten events, this seemed to be a sensible way to proceed. There is little guidance in the literature on research on this practice. For the most part, ethnographic interviews tend to favour a more open-ended and spontaneous type of interview (Ball, 1981; Woods, 1986). Most participants, however, made rather copious notes before their interviews, which demonstrated the seriousness with which they approached the interview, and many expressed appreciation for the opportunity to reflect on past experiences. Some even enjoyed the opportunity to recapture their part of the Byron story.

I began each interview with a series of brief demographic questions. This enabled me to place each subject into their Byron and present contexts (Appendix 2). It also allowed

me to make sure the tape recorder was working properly. All respondents were asked the same initiating questions. This structure enabled me to compare and contrast responses on similar topics and begin to identify emerging patterns. I would follow each structured question with focused supplementary questions, most of which I had scripted before the interview. I often used behavioural description interview approaches (Janz et al, 1986). This is a type of questioning which I have used to interview candidates for management positions in which applicants are asked to describe their behaviours in certain situations. A supplementary question using this approach in the Byron interviews might be, how did you react to this situation? or give me some examples of how the Byron philosophy impacted your professional practice? This often resulted in quite in-depth and revealing responses.

Structured interviews if taken to extreme, however, can become rather stultified, unless balanced by more open-ended strategies. For my purposes, the unstructured and non-directive interviews (Cohen and Manion, 1989) which leave the subject full range to explore topics of interest with minimal intervention and control by the interviewer had the potential to be both time consuming and aimless. To balance the structure I had introduced, I initiated a focused aspect to each interview. I allowed respondents to be spontaneous and creative but with my cues, encouragement, and redirection. My supplementary questions therefore, tended to be idiosyncratic based on the nature of the respondent's answers and usually built upon information I had received from previous interviews. I would often check a story or statement for corroboration or correction. As Ball (1981) states, respondent "validation of interpretative analyses is a major weapon in the ideological battle with 'positivism'" (p.98). As themes and issues emerged, a more open-ended, less structured component of the interview was added to tap the unique

knowledge or perspective of interview subjects. As a result of this later process, the category of 'meaning' was added to the list of organising concepts because the Byron philosophy was such a powerful continuing theme in all the discussions.

- Recording data

To arrange interviews I would make a personal phone call to each prospective respondent. During the call I explained the purpose of the research project, the confidentiality aspects of the interview, and the length, and conditions of the process. I then established a mutually convenient time and went to a place of their choosing. On a number of occasions, this meant driving two or three hours to meet some people who had moved great distances from Middleton. I attempted to ensure that time and space were not inhibiting factors in the interview process. Before each interview I asked permission to audio tape the conversation. While I was still employed by the South Board, I had access to secretarial support to transcribe interviews. This disappeared once I left the Board, and I found myself performing this task. Ironically, the loss of this help enabled me to become more conversant with the substance of the interviews I transcribed, and expedited my use of the materials considerably. I also took notes during the interview. In addition to the essence of the respondent's answers, I recorded my observations of body language, emphasis, and tone of voice. I also jotted down ideas for subsequent questions or directions which I might pursue later in the interview or with other subjects.

- Verification of interview data

Throughout the interview process, I took particular care to verify the data I was receiving in the interviews. The process advocated in the literature to do this is triangulation (Woods, 1986; Merriam, 1988; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1990). “Good research practice obligates the researcher to triangulate, that is to use multiple methods, data sources, and researchers to enhance the validity of research findings” (Mathison, 1988). Denzin (1978) suggests that there are three useful approaches to triangulation. Data triangulation refers to the use of several data sources. My selection of a broad cross-section of Byron staff, as well as the choice of staff from different eras provide examples of data triangulation. A second type, investigator triangulation, occurs when a number of investigators are involved in the research process. Since I was the sole investigator in this study, this form of triangulation was not appropriate.

Methodological triangulation is by far the most common type, and an approach used in this study. In addition to document, interview and life history sources, I was able to bring my own experience and knowledge to bear on each interview. This was invaluable to detect distortion (Denscombe, 1983) and to employ Whyte’s (1982) ‘negative’ checks. I listened for plausibility of explanations; I knew the respondents and their degree of reliability; I also was aware of some of the issues in respondents’ lives which might have affected their evidence and, as stated previously, the design of the interview schedule facilitated cross-checking. Initiating processes to triangulate, however, does not necessarily eliminate bias (Jick, 1983, p. 138). Miles and Huberman (1984a) suggest that triangulation is a state of mind which requires the researcher “consciously [to] set out to collect and double-check findings using multiple sources and modes of evidence . . . (p. 235). My unique personal relationship to Lord Byron and to my respondents reinforced this consciousness. As my interview data accumulated, I followed Mathison’s (1988)

advice, and looked for convergence, inconsistencies and contradictions in the evidence.

She suggests that:

The value of triangulation is not as a technological solution to a data collection and analysis problem, it is as technique which provides more and better evidence from which researchers can *construct meaningful propositions* about the social world. The value of triangulation lies in providing evidence such that the researcher can construct explanations in the social phenomena from which they arise (p. 15).

Life history

The third source of data was from my investigation of the relationship of Lord Byron to the professional and personal lives of the respondents. Measor and Sikes (1992) define life history studies as “sociologically read biography” (p. 209). Lord Byron had been important in my professional, and to a certain extent, my personal life. I believed that others had been similarly influenced. If I could establish a link between the Byron experience and the subsequent careers of my respondents then I could begin to establish some idea of the school’s influence in the larger system over time. My review of the change literature had already convinced me of the importance of investigating teachers’ work and lives as part of my larger conceptual framework (Ball and Goodson, 1985; Goodson and Walker, 1991; Goodson, 1992). My reading of Ball’s (1981) investigation of *Beachside Comprehensive* and Woods’ (1979) study of *The Divided School* for the literature review in Chapter One further confirmed my view that this was a methodological approach worth pursuing in more depth than I had

originally intended. Since this avenue coincided with my decision to be less structured and introduce a focused component to my interviews, I augmented my scripted questions (see Appendix 2) with more in-depth probes into the question of Byron's relationship to respondents' professional and personal lives.

I was conscious of ethical issues (Woods, 1986). I made every effort to ensure respondents' confidentiality and deal with information with sensitivity. I found life history research a difficult area to investigate. Like other investigators, I struggled to find the balance between capturing the respondent's biography as part of the larger context and 'dabbling' in amateur therapy. I usually opened this discussion by indicating how important the Byron experience had been for me. This self disclosure, especially with staff from the 1970s often elicited a 'me too' response. This sharing of experiences was very useful in understanding the perspectives of others who came to Byron at a different point in their careers. Perhaps the most revealing aspect resulted from the group interview with the women's group. They talked very openly of their perceptions of the leadership of the school, their appreciation of the opportunities they received, and their frustrations with structures and cultures. They shared their problems of balancing careers, spouses, and children.

Some former colleagues, however, perhaps 15 in number, were not quite so forthcoming on this kind of issue. While they were very open on other areas of the research, they tended to avoid or divert the discussion when issues 'struck too close to home'. In spite of my best efforts, I found investigation of these topics frustrating. Ironically, in most case these were people with whom I had a good personal relationship. My attribution is that our past histories together, and in a few cases our continuing relationships,

influenced their openness with me. Whether a less involved and neutral researcher would have elicited more information than I was able to glean, is a question that lingers.

The critique of this form of research is the same as that of qualitative research in general. Cizek (1995) bemoans what he considers the capturing of qualitative studies by people who advocate 'socio-political causes' and challenges the "hegemony of the narrative" (p.26). We must, he suggests, be on guard not to valorise teacher stories and we, therefore, need to subject them to rigorous investigation. In dealing with the stories people told me, I looked for patterns in the narratives - the consistencies, discrepancies and the inconsistencies. Since the interview questions were similar and the sample of respondents chosen from three different eras, the collective stories tended to coalesce into a shared narrative which in many ways captured the changes in the school over time. These shifts in perspective are identified in the analytical chapters which follow.

In pursuit of validity

Cizek's (1995) title for his article 'Crunchy Granola and the Hegemony of the Narrative' is his satirical way of making a connection between qualitative methodologies and socio-political causes - his example of the latter is the need for a high fibre diet. This initiates his theme that qualitative researchers "are often not so much practitioners but *believers*" (p. 27). His critique raises the question of the validity of approaches such as those used in this project, because there is a 'looseness' and lack of precision to these qualitative methodologies. Maxwell (1992), however, suggests that validity defined by a set of procedures is not the only type of validity available. He argues that:

The most prevalent alternative is a realist conception of validity that sees the validity of an account as inherent, not in the procedures used to produce and validate it, but in its relationship to those things that it is intended to be an account *of* (p. 281).

He contends that the important thing to remember about this approach to validity is that it refers “primarily to accounts, not to data, or methods” (p. 283). He offers five types of validity: descriptive validity, interpretive validity, theoretical validity, generalisability, and evaluative validity. Since these types of validity correspond so closely to Peshkin’s (1993) outcomes of ‘good qualitative research’, it seemed logical to design and implement a research plan which attempted to hold itself to these types of validity. The following few paragraphs connect the methodologies described previously to each type of validity and how the present case acknowledged each as the research evolved.

Descriptive validity

This form of validity focuses on the factual accuracy of the account. Descriptions were checked in a number of ways. First each description was corroborated by archival data where appropriate. Second, one person’s account was cross-checked against another’s through the consistency of many of the questions. Finally, as a participant in most of the events described, I felt I was in a position to recognise omissions, discrepancies and misinformation. What came through strongly in this research was the agreement of virtually all respondents in terms of events, and their consequences.

Interpretive validity

Interpretive validity attempts to understand phenomena “not on the basis of the researcher’s perspective and categories, but from those of the participants in the situation studied” (Maxwell, 1992, p. 290). To this end, I spent the first 10 to 15 minutes of each interview attempting to understand the respondent’s context at the time he or she was involved with Byron (appendix 2). In addition to demographic data, I determined why each person had joined Byron, why each had left, if in fact they had, and where the Byron experience fitted into the context of their life, not only professionally but personally. Responses were often followed by such questions as: how did you feel about that? how did you react to that situation? did this or that event change your opinion or philosophy or values? The final check was often a phone call to ensure that I had indeed understood the respondent. In a few cases, I reinterviewed to elicit elaboration of important information and opinions.

Theoretical validity

As the research proceeded, certain hypotheses emerged about different events, perceptions, results, and activities. I was careful to gain the insights of respondents about these emerging hypotheses. Maxwell (1992) discriminates between the two previously described types of validity and theoretical validity. The latter “goes beyond concrete descriptions and interpretations and explicitly addresses the theoretical constructions that the researcher brings to and develops during the study” (p. 291). In addition, theoretical validity refers to the accounts and explanations of phenomena as well as description or

interpretation. Theoretical validity attends to the validity of the concepts involved and the relationship between and among concepts. My reading of the change literature provided a theoretical framework which I considered important to confirm, reject or modify as my investigation proceeded. Similarly, the literature review in Chapter One raised a number of theories and hypotheses. As these theories developed or changed or as new ones emerged, they were checked out in subsequent interviews. For example, it became obvious early on that the charisma and influence of the first principal were so pervasive that the Byron concept was, for many staff members, tied to his persona. After his departure a number of Lord Byron staff members found it difficult to transfer their loyalties to the Byron concept. There is little comment on this phenomena in the leadership literature, although there is some confirmation in the 'new' school literature (Fletcher et al, 1985; Smith et al, 1987). Each subsequent principal interviewed, therefore, was asked about this hypothesis. All agreed that the initiating principal's impact was important, but no one concurred with the idea that the meaning of the Byron concept faltered because of his departure.

Some consensus emerged, however, about factors that influenced Byron. These included principal transfers, the loss of the critical mass of innovators, the ups and downs of enrolment and the ageing of the staff, to mention a few. The similarity of responses from individuals, who performed different roles, from different eras of the school's history confirmed these explanations, and gave validity to them as explanations of the essential questions of change over time. These are examples of "pattern theories" because something is explained "when it is so related to a set of other elements that together they constitute a unified system. We understand something by identifying it as a specific part in an organised whole" (Kaplan, 1964, p. 333).

Generalisability

The design of the research which purposely chose people from three eras of the school's history at random was one way to promote the generalisability of the study's conclusions. For example, if a significant number of people regardless of era in the school, and chosen in a semi-random fashion, articulated the same basic philosophy for the school then there was sufficient corroborating evidence 'grounded' in the respondents' reports, to suggest that that statements about the pupil-centredness of the school were accurate. This is an example of *internal generalisability*. As the previous discussion of verification as it applied to the methods employed in this study suggests, I was particularly conscious of this requirement of credible case studies.

Qualitative researchers, however, make few claims about *external generalisability* (Schofield, 1993). The usefulness, if not validity of this study, must be determined by the reader and the relevance of the Byron case to the reader's context. In the last analysis it will be the readers who decide whether the case rings true in their contexts. Perhaps a better phrase than generalisation is what Guba and Lincoln (1981) call 'fittingness' which is the degree to which a situation or case fits another situation or case. This is what Stake (1978) has called '*naturalistic generalisation*'. This study, therefore, will make few claims that the Lord Byron experience proves this or that, but the study does intend to provide considerable guidance for policy makers, school improvement teams and professional staff on issues as diverse as succession planning, building design, alternative staffing among many other concepts which emerged from this case. Cronbach (1975) suggests the results of qualitative research should produce a 'working hypothesis.'

“When we give proper weight to local conditions, any generalization is a working hypothesis, not a conclusion” (p. 124-125). For example the life cycle of Byron provides a ‘working hypothesis’ for others to consider in their development of new settings. Since this study also identifies the crucial junctures in Byron’s ‘attrition of change’, these ‘danger points’ can provide useful reminders of potential pitfalls in the evolution of new settings.

Evaluation validity

This type involves the validity of the value judgements made about the case. Maxwell (1992) makes the point that descriptive, interpretive and theoretical validity are much more important in qualitative research. He contends that:

evaluative understanding and evaluative validity in qualitative research do not seem to me to be intrinsically different from those in any other approach to research . . . To raise questions about the evaluative framework implicit in an account, however, as many critical theorists do, *creates* issues of an account’s evaluative validity, and no account is immune to such questions (p. 295).

Throughout this study and particularly in the concluding chapter, I have attempted to draw from the study some recommendations and suggestions for policy makers and school personnel. As Wilson (1979) suggests, there is enough information on outcomes, ‘how-to’, and ‘how-not-to’ from good case studies in general to assist people who are involved in similar situations. The intention is that this Lord Byron project provides guidelines for sustaining change, not a blueprint. Lacey (1970) makes

this point in his introduction to Hightown Grammar by quoting Frankenburg (1963) when he states:

an essential ingredient of the social sciences is ‘. . . a methodology in which the discussion of small segments of society in great detail is used to throw light on the general’. He continues, ‘ It is my firm view that only the particularistic can illuminate the universalistic’ (p. xi)

Data analysis

The history of Lord Byron tends to divide into three eras, the period of innovation and experimentation which lasted until the mid 1970s; a period of explosive growth in pupil population and equally dramatic enrolment decline which lasted until the mid 1980s, and finally the past ten years which have been years of relative stability. As I describe in the next chapter, I settled on six constructs or organisers for the data. Since each construct is based on well developed theory, I was able to test my data and elaborate on pre-existing theory. By combining the historical eras and the constructs into a matrix (Figure 2), I organised my information onto three large pieces of chart paper.

Figure 2

Construct/ Era	1970 to 1975	1975 to 1985	1985 to 1995
1. Context			
2. Meaning			
3. Structure			
4. Culture			

Construct/ Era	1970 to 1975	1975 to 1985	1985 to 1995
5. Leadership			
6. Teachers' lives and work			

I literally cut and pasted the hard copies of my transcribed interviews on to the chart paper in the appropriate sections. I was able to work cell by cell to develop a picture of the interactions and interconnections that characterised Byron in each of the three eras. I made no attempt to count the number of responses on a given topic or in Ball's (1993) terms be a 'closet positivist', but rather I tried to determine trends and patterns in the data.

By going back and forth between my reorganised interview transcripts, the relevant documents, and filtering the data based on my own experiences, and my knowledge of the relevant literature, I was able to determine the broad themes and conduct a detailed analysis. For example, a turning point in Byron's evolution was the departure of the initiating principal and his replacement by a promoted vice principal from another school. If one were to believe the school's list of achievements in the three years following the initial principal's departure, it would appear that the school only experienced success. As a principal in another school at the time, I knew that relationships in the school between the staff and its new principal were strained. The existence of this tension was confirmed time and time again in the interviews. My interview with the new principal, helped me to understand the nature of the tension and also why he pushed the school into a phase I have described as 'overreaching'. Similarly, Fullan and his colleagues' (1972) focus on the role of the organising committee for Thornlea High School led to my reappraisal of

the functioning and significance of the Innovations Committee in the South Board which helped to plan Lord Byron High School.

Writing Up

Woods (1986) concludes that the “point where rich data, careful analysis and lofty ideas meet the iron discipline of writing is one of the great problem areas in qualitative research.” (p. 188). He offers three reasons. The first is the emphasis qualitative approaches place on the researcher as the “chief research instrument, which tends to make such problems more personal than they really are” (p. 188). Secondly, he indicates that the on-going open-ended dialogue between data collection and theory mitigates against early foreclosure. Finally, he identifies “the necessity in view of this, to regard the ‘writing-up’ process as an important inducement to the production of ideas, as well as to communication. This disjuncture produces pain” (p.188). As the bibliography suggests, I am not a total neophyte when it comes to academic writing, however, the ‘pain’ that Woods refers to seldom went away. The decision to begin to write-up my conclusions merely opened innumerable avenues for further investigation and research. The unsettled feeling that there is one more source or one more interview required to consolidate a particular concept or theory never went away. The collection of data could have become a lifetime occupation. The synthesising of massive amounts of data into meaningful prose meant innumerable rewrites. Fortunately I do use a word processor which makes the constant redrafting more tolerable, but still painful. There are few guidelines for the writing up of qualitative case study research, although there are a myriad of suggestions. The process is idiosyncratic, and the best one can do is to learn from other authors’ models and experiences (Woods, 1979; Ball, 1981; Hargreaves, 1987; Burgess, 1987).

Conclusion

Many writers on qualitative case studies have agreed that the researcher is the primary methodological tool in the development of a qualitative study (Wood, 1986; Merriam, 1988; Ball, 1993). A qualitative researcher cannot hide behind an elaborate set of methodological procedures which are designed to remove his person from the results of the investigation. He must present his methodology in sufficient detail to allow the reader to judge the adequacy of the investigation, description, and analysis of the case. It is the reader who needs to be assured of the researcher's 'skilful self' (Ball, 1993). To this end I have attempted in this chapter to share my personal methodological odyssey.

Like more accomplished researchers, I was well into this project before I could answer Becker's question "what is this a case of?". Ragin and Becker (1992) described this process when they stated:

Researchers probably will not know what their cases are until the research including the task of writing up the results, is virtually completed. What it is a case of will coalesce gradually, sometimes catalytically, and in the final realization of the case's nature may be the most important part of the interaction between ideas and evidence (p. 6).

This approach fits rather well with my own biography. As a teacher, principal and senior manager, I must admit to a long held cynicism towards most educational research. As a

professional educator, I have always subscribed, and probably still do, to what Doyle and Ponder (1977) call the 'practicality ethic'. As they explain:

. . . if an effective change strategy is ever to be devised, it must be constructed on a more thorough understanding of the naturally existing mechanisms which operate in school environments. Statements of how change should occur are not very useful in interpreting how classroom teachers actually respond to influences which impinge upon established habits and practices (p. 1).

As a teacher and manager I adopted procedures which 'worked' in the real world that I lived in. Like most professional educators, trial and error were perhaps my best teachers. I was prepared to entertain research-based findings if the researcher had demonstrated some understanding of the complexity of schools, and reject what I considered simplistic notions which dealt with one or two dimensions of the process, divorced from the total experience. Academics who reduced schooling to a few variables, or glibly espoused broad educational theories were usually ignored by me and most of my colleagues. A research approach, such as the case study method, therefore, that invited examination of a school in an holistic, comprehensive, and ecological way appealed to my 'practicality ethic' and made intellectual sense to my understanding of schools as complex, non-linear organisations. To build on this perspective I identified six broad interrelated constructs which became the lenses through which I viewed Lord Byron school in my data collection, analysis and reporting. Their importance as the on-going organising framework for the entire project, therefore, necessitates the detailed discussion of each construct which now follows in Chapter Three.

Chapter 3

Conceptual Framework

To develop a conceptual framework for my analysis and reporting of the research on Lord Byron, I sought to view the school as an integrated whole rather than the sum of its parts. This approach is quite consistent with recent literature on change in schools.

As Fullan (1990) has written:

Our attention in policy, practice and research has shifted in recent years, away from preoccupation with single innovations toward more basic, integrative, and systematic reform. Changes in the culture of schools, in the roles and relationships of schools, districts, universities and states, and in integrating teacher development, school improvement, leadership and curriculum toward more engaging learning experiences for students and teachers, dominate the current scene and will continue to do so for the rest of the decade (p. 137).

Since the publication of Fullan's germinal book The Meaning of Educational Change in 1982, there has been a considerable body of international research on the process of educational change (van Velzen et al, 1985; Fullan, 1991, Fullan and Miles, 1992; Fullan, 1993; Hopkins et al, 1994, Hargreaves, 1994; Stoll and Fink, 1996; Hargreaves, Earl and Ryan, 1996, Sarason, 1991; 1996). An important British contribution to this literature has been the in-depth ethnographic examination of change processes within schools (D. Hargreaves, 1967; Lacey, 1970; Woods, 1979; Ball, 1981; Burgess, 1983; Hargreaves, 1986). In addition, studies on teachers' lives have provided insights into how teachers

respond to change (Lortie, 1975; Woods, 1979; Sikes, 1985; Smith et al, 1987; Grant, 1988; Goodson and Walker, 1991; Louden, 1991; Bishop and Mulford, 1996). These studies have augmented the more global descriptions of the change and/or school improvement literature by demonstrating the importance of context and the complexity of change at the local level. The Lord Byron study attempts to combine these various components of the change literature.

To this end, I originally identified the concepts of change, context, culture, teachers' work, and teachers' lives as the components of my conceptual framework. These were constructs identified as core conceptual themes in a meeting of international scholars to initiate a study of professional teacher cultures (Report of meeting: Professional Cultures of Teachers, San Francisco, April 18-19, 1992). My own background, reading (Telford, 1996), and interests suggested that leadership is crucial to change in schools and should also be a distinct category for analysis (Fink, 1992a,b; Fullan, 1993; Stoll and Fink, 1996). Moreover, after the first few interviews, it became obvious that the structure of the school and the school's meaning and purposes were key constructs which required elaboration. It became equally apparent that it was virtually impossible to separate teachers' work from teachers' lives (Hargreaves, 1991a). Since change is a concept which runs throughout my analysis I concluded that it should be integrated into each category, I finally settled on six interrelated lenses or frames through which to view Lord Byron High School: context, meaning, leadership, structure, culture, teachers' work and lives. The following discussion, therefore, defines and develops each of these constructs to provide a foundation for the data analysis in subsequent chapters.

Context

Context has a powerful effect upon change in schools and classrooms in particular, and especially in new schools that are challenging the educational and parent communities' perceptions of how a 'real school' should function (Metz, 1991). Context may be defined as "the whole situation, background, or environment relevant to some happening" (Grossman and Stodolsky, 1994, p.181). It has many parts, as Smith and his colleagues' (1987) concept of 'nested systems' indicates. For purposes of this discussion, I have discriminated between the internal context that includes the pupils, subjects and departments, and the school itself; and the external context that encompasses, among other influences, the district (L.E.A.) of which the school is a part, the school's parent and neighbouring community, the teachers' union, and the state, province and/or nation in which the school and district are located. Since the discussion of context is potentially so extensive and complex, I have limited my discussion to those aspects of context that are most relevant to the Lord Byron case.

Internal context

Pupils

"Educational change depends on what teachers do and think - its as simple and complex as that" (Fullan, 1991, p. 117). Change efforts which have failed to consider teachers' contexts have little chance for success (McLaughlin, 1990, Elmore, 1995, Cohen, 1995). The contextual factor which matters most to teachers is their pupils (McLaughlin, 1993). The nature of teachers' responses to their pupils, however, are as diverse as there are teachers. An individual teacher's sense of efficacy will vary depending on the classes he

or she teaches, the socio-economic background of the pupils (Teddle and Stringfield, 1993), the subject(s) taught, the school's mission, and the teacher's individual knowledge, beliefs, and skills (Grossman and Stodolsky, 1994). Certain broad patterns of teacher response to the challenges pupils present have emerged in the research literature. McLaughlin and Talbert (1993) report that one type of adaptation occurs when teachers consider that the achievement and discipline problems pupils bring to the classroom are the result of external factors such as inadequate parenting or societal failures. These teachers, therefore, tend to respond by reinforcing traditional standards of discipline based on authority, transmission approaches to pedagogy, and concentration on a fact-based curriculum. Teachers who react this way are inclined to become cynical, frustrated and burned out. The lowering of standards of achievement and discipline is a second response to pupil-created problems.Sizer's (1984) Horace's Compromise describes this response in detail. He observes that many teachers tacitly agree not to bother the pupils and the pupils respond by not creating problems for the teacher. "Regardless of teachers' rationale, both teachers and students in classrooms of this stripe find themselves bored and disengaged from teaching and learning" (McLaughlin and Talbert, 1993, p. 6). The third orientation is one in which teachers attempt to change practices and adopt more flexible pupil-centred strategies which involve teaching for understanding, activity learning, and more pupil engaging strategies such as co-operative learning. This adaptive approach is also fraught with difficulty. As McLaughlin and Talbert (1993) explain:

. . . some teachers who attempted such changes in practice, . . . were unable to sustain them and became frustrated and discouraged. This is because learning how to teach for student understanding goes against the grain of traditional classroom practice and so entails radical change and risks obstruction. Those

teachers who made effective adaptations to today's students had one thing in common: each belonged to an effective professional community which encouraged and enabled them to transform their teaching (p. 7).

There is also some evidence that pupils' responses to change often inhibit innovation (Rudduck, 1991;1997). Unfortunately this is an area we know very little about because as Fullan (1991) states, "no one ever asks them" (p. 182). What evidence is available, suggests that pupils respond in one of four ways: indifference, confusion, temporary escape from boredom, and heightened interest with learning and school. Fullan declares that: "Effective change in schools involves just as much cognitive and behavioral change on the part of students as it does anyone else" (p. 188). In considering the context for change he concludes educators must "stop thinking of students just in terms of learning outcomes and start thinking of them as people who are also being asked to become involved in new activities" (p. 189). Corbett and Wilson (1995) go even further and recommend that "student role redefinition is a critical linchpin between adult reform behavior and student success, and the failure to acknowledge and accept this connection is a potentially fatal flaw in promoting our understanding of reform and in creating effective change initiatives" (p. 12)

Departments and subjects

In some situations, a teacher's subject orientation, department and/or professional network provide a 'professional community'. Conversely, in other circumstance these contexts promote patterns of professional adaptations that reinforce traditional and often 'watered-down' curricula and teaching (Grossman and Stodolsky, 1994). Subject

departments are also a critical context for secondary school teachers (Ball, 1981; Hargreaves et al, 1992; Little, 1993; McLaughlin and Talbert, 1993). As Siskin (1994) indicates, departments have become “a crucial part of the context of teaching in high school, for it is the department which organizes teachers spatially, temporally, administratively, and symbolically . . .” (p.12). Membership in certain departments provides prestige, influence and resources, whereas other departments and their teachers tend to be marginalised and less influential. Bennet (1985) argues that a teacher’s subject and department affiliation can influence promotion opportunities. A teacher from a marginalised department such as visual arts, for example, has less chance for promotion than a teacher in a mathematics or science department.

Little (1993) identifies three factors which determine departmental strength and status: membership of full-time specialists, a substantive department chair position, and a coherent stance toward curricular policy (p. 157). In Britain, Canada, and the United States, academic departments such as mathematics and science enjoy greater status than non-academic departments like the arts, physical education and vocational training (Ball, 1987; Hargreaves et al, 1992; Siskin, 1994). Departments with enhanced status may, however, be different in schools with a special mission. Talbert (1993) found that in vocational schools, technical departments had higher status than academic departments. University and college requirements and outside assessments can also influence status (Stodolsky, 1993). Graduation requirements which emphasise certain subjects add or diminish departmental prestige and influence. Assessment programmes that tend to focus on a few subjects, such as mathematics, science and English, reinforce these departments and marginalise non-assessed areas. The result, as Finley (1984) states, is that: “Within the institutions, teachers take on the status of the clientele” (p. 239).

There is little agreement on the efficacy of departments as vehicles for school change. McLaughlin and Talbert (1993) seem to promote collegial departments as a prerequisite for change in schools. Others have suggested that departments tend to work against school-wide initiatives and promote balkanization (Hargreaves, 1994). Siskin's (1994) study describes how departments get involved in issues of power and politics in a school:

The realm of academic departments create boundary lines which constrain high school communications, and social worlds which can sustain subject colleagues within their small groups, but they are also micro-political arenas where critical 'material endowments' of funding time and space are 'defended' and 'distributed' (p.113).

Ball (1987) has described some departments as fiefdoms where teachers enjoy rewards for loyalty and experience punishment for treason.

Studies of school subjects have indicated that they also provide a context which "can be characterized by conflict between subjects over status, resources and territory" (Goodson, 1983, p. 3). In addition, subjects "exert differential effects on teachers' ideas about academic knowledge and about classroom instruction" (Yaakobi and Sharan, 1985, p. 196) and can have a powerful effect on teachers' responses to change (Grossman and Stodolsky, 1993). English teachers, for example tend to respond more positively to progressive methodologies such as individualisation of instruction, whereas mathematics teachers are much more inclined to group by previous achievement (Ball, 1981). It appears quite clear, therefore, that teachers' subject orientation and the departments in

which they teach have a significant effect upon their classroom practices and willingness to entertain new ideas (Lacey 1977; Goodson, 1983; Ball and Bowes, 1992). Indeed, it seems that secondary teachers' academic orientation is a major impediment to change in secondary schools (Goodson, 1983, Siskin, 1994). Attempts to promote more interdisciplinary programmes often fail because of the hegemony of subjects and departments (Hargreaves, et al, 1992). These divisions or academic 'tribes' (Grossman and Stodolsky, 1993) are reinforced by such external contextual factors as university compartmentalisation and provincial and national subject organisations.

The school as context

There is a substantial body of recent school effectiveness literature which shows the impact of the school upon teachers' efficacy and pupils' achievement (Rutter et al, 1970; Mortimore et al, 1988; Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993). Mortimore (1991) defines an effective school as one in which "pupils progress further than might be expected from consideration of its intake" (p. 216). This line of research has identified a number of contextual factors which have enabled some schools, regardless of their socio-economic context, to promote more effective teacher practices which in turn enhance pupils' accomplishments.

- 'High consensus schools' (Rosenholtz, 1989) in which the staff members share a vision of what they are trying to achieve, and identify and support goals to carry out their vision are more effective for all pupils.

- Schools which socialise new teachers to a vision of school growth, experience greater cohesiveness and less turnover than less effective schools (Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993).
- The degree of teaching collaboration appears to be an important determinant of more effective schools. Rosenholtz (1989) identified two types of schools in her extensive research into elementary schools in Tennessee - moving schools and stuck schools. In moving schools teachers believed that “many minds tended to work together better than the few” (p. 208), whereas in ‘stuck schools’ norms of self reliance and isolation prevailed. Moving schools tend to be ‘learning enriched’ settings in which teachers enjoy a spirit of continuous improvement. Conversely, stuck schools are often ‘learning impoverished’ because “there appeared to be a numbing sameness, a routine lurking in teachers’ work: the same questions, the same answers, no shared or common purpose, and little helpful leadership by principals . . .” (p. 208). She also concluded that moving schools enjoy a high degree of teacher commitment to enhanced learning experiences for pupils, and teachers’ certainty and confidence that problems can be solved. Teachers “tended to search for reasons and ways to help, not for excuses for their failures” (p. 209).
- The importance of the school’s principal is reinforced in numerous studies (Mortimore, et al, 1988, Smith and Andrews, 1989; Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993). Principals who support teacher improvement, promote a positive learning ethos, and expect high standards of performance from teachers and pupils are a crucial part of the internal context.

External Contexts

District context

Just as classrooms exist within a context of subjects, departments and schools, schools function within a much larger context which often dramatically influences their effective functioning. The district in which the school resides is the first line of influence. As Louis and Miles (1990) advise: “Always keep one eye on the district. Be prepared to negotiate steadily but discreetly for special status, especially in a rule oriented bureaucracy” (p. 188). Evidence suggests that more effective schools are located in districts where supportive interactions occur between schools and central office staff (Rosenholtz, 1989; Coleman and LaRocque, 1990; Fullan, 1991). Indeed, Rosenholtz (1989) found districts with strongly bureaucratic, top-down structures were considerably less effective than districts which allowed teachers to experience more autonomy to learn and to improve their work within a context of overall regional direction and support. Similarly, schools unsupported by larger networks find school improvement exceedingly difficult (Fullan, 1991, Barber, 1995). This theme of top-down, bottom-up change permeates the change literature (Louis and Miles, 1990; McLaughlin and Talbert, 1993; Stoll and Fink, 1992; 1994).

Conversely, it is unlikely that an ineffective school will continue to be ineffective within an effective school system. At their best, school systems can be powerful partners for schools (Stoll and Fink, 1992; 1994; Brouillette, 1996). Districts which promote positive change in schools and classrooms are characterised by the following attributes:

- effective districts engender improvement in schools through the thoughtful and careful selection of instructional leaders as principals (Smith and Andrews, 1989) and the careful “matching of principals with schools” (Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993, p.223). The failure to do so has been graphically described in Gold and Miles’ (1981) study outlined in Chapter One;
- successful districts tend to capitalise on natural occurring change efforts by encouraging the school’s leadership team and supporting change in context. Stoll and Fink (1996) have suggested that different types of schools require different leadership and school improvement strategies. Rather than the ‘one size fits all’ approach of some districts and jurisdictions, successful districts tend to “nurture and create improvement processes that are indigenous to particular school contexts” (Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993);
- Coleman and Laroque (1989, p. 190) concluded that effective districts ‘have an active and evolving accountability ethos that combines interactive monitoring with a respect for school autonomy;
- effective districts recruit and select teachers who are committed to district goals for pupils’ learning and continuous improvement. In addition, these districts do not just transfer or try to hide less successful teachers. They focus on supportive practices, and if help is unsuccessful, they facilitate the teacher’s dismissal (Smith and Andrews, 1989).

As Fullan (1991) states, schools cannot redesign themselves. “The role of the district is crucial. Individual schools can become highly innovative for short periods of time without the district, but they cannot *stay* innovative without the district action to establish the conditions for continuous and long term improvement” (p. 209).

The state context

Broulitté’s (1996) case study of the Cottonwood school district provides a useful example of how a district, that by all measures could be considered a successful school district, was undermined by its context within a state. In spite of the district’s best efforts to promote growth in its schools, it found itself caught between the larger political influences of the state and the more localised political issues of the various school communities. In its attempt to promote more decentralised decision-making, the paradoxical forces of representative democracy, as played out in the state legislature and the district’s board room, and participatory democracy as reflected in parent councils, challenged the district’s ability to support its schools. More particularly, in a district that had promoted greater openness with parents and greater involvement in decision-making, community members attacked it for issues which often did not apply to the district but were part of the larger educational context. When the state engineered severe budget cuts and ‘schools of choice’, community members took out their wrath on the nearest source of frustration, the district. The authors of the changes, the state legislators, were too remote to access. The district and the schools also took the brunt of national and international criticism of schools engendered by the state and national press. The community attacked the district for a lack of communication and fiscal irresponsibility when in fact it communicated more openly than most districts and, by any standard, was

quite fiscally responsible. It would seem that the more schools and particularly districts communicate with their communities the more they are subjected to criticism. Brouillette (1996) concludes that Sarason's (1991) advice that school improvement will not occur unless power relationships within schools are addressed is insufficient. She argues that based on the challenges faced by the Cottonwood district that "the effectiveness of restructuring (or reform) efforts will be limited unless power relationships in the social context within which public schools are embedded are also transformed" (p. 208).

In recent years, governments in various countries have adopted neo-conservative reforms in the name of national economic competitiveness. Local autonomy over the things that matter in education such as curriculum and assessing pupil progress have been trampled by central governments' rush to national curricula, more pupil assessment and fiscal responsibility. Educators have gradually awakened to the omnipresent role of the state in determining the context in which teachers work and schools function. Criticism of this invasive role of government into the functioning of schools has been widespread and largely ineffective (Bracey, 1991, 1992; Ball, 1993, Barlow and Robertson, 1994). While the change literature has attended to micro-politics (Ball, 1987; Blase, 1988) within schools, districts and schools are buffeted by macro-politics. Certainly the history of new schools as outlined in the first chapter speaks to the inability of educators to deal with political vicissitudes.

Community context

Mirel (1994) provides a detailed examination of how macro-politics disrupted a school district, its communities and its schools. The arguments which erupted over a federally

initiated 'break-the-mold' reform effort in the Bensonville district in the United States destroyed the project and the potential of significant school improvement. Local rivalries and the inability of the district to anticipate and handle the macro-political environment were contributing factors. Mirel (1994) suggests that significant change will not occur unless reformers address the material and political dimensions of reform "well before embarking on a campaign of change." He indicates that reformers:

must face the power-brokering reality of the reform process, clearly recognizing which issues strike deeply at vested interests . . . they must be as well versed in strategic negotiation and alliance building as they are in devising breakthrough educational programs. In the process, they must also become competent in judging when to compromise, redesign or stand fast. Reformers will have to recognize that the process of change involves not just building constituencies but also maintaining them, not just gaining power but exercising it wisely (p. 516).

He also suggests that 'less is more'. This advice is directly contradictory to McLaughlin (1990) who concludes from the Rand study that large change efforts have a greater chance of success. Mirel suggests that large projects which undertake to make dramatic change threaten a community's concept of a 'real school' (Metz, 1991). This picks up a theme from Chapter One. The conception of a 'good school' as defined by professional expertise in Bensonville was quite out of line with the public's perception of what a 'real school' looked like. The public saw many of the advocates of new ideas, with their associated exclusionary jargon, out of step with what the public believed was common sense (Gold and Miles, 1981; Fletcher et al, 1985; Grant, 1988; Brouillette, 1996). As in the case of Bensonville, many projects which were touted to be 'innovative', break-the

mold' or 'state-of-the-art' promised too much and delivered too little. Mirel suggests that smaller scale, low-key, rather understated reform efforts have a greater chance of receiving community support. Since education has always been highly politicised perhaps this is good advice. He suggests that the way to avoid the pitfalls of macro-political conflict is:

to recognize from the start that efforts at educational change inevitably deal with such powerful issues as control of highly prized institutions, levels of taxation, and job security. Reform also confronts deeply held values and exposes some of the most fundamental passions surrounding parents' hopes and fears about their children (p. 518).

In recent years, the role of the community has become an increasingly important topic in the change literature (Fullan, 1991; Morgan and Morgan, 1992; Edwards and Jones Young, 1992; Epstein, 1995). Governments have concluded that decentralising some decisions directly to schools and councils of parents will lead to better decisions. As the Cottonwood situation indicates, this can create more problems than it solves. In some situations, parents with little expertise in educational issues are making decisions which more properly should be made by people with some understanding of the educative process. Participatory democracy, on occasion, can also conflict with representative democracy. When the Cottonwood trustees tried to equalise boundaries to protect the enrolment and the programme offerings of a school with a significant percentage of minorities, the white middle-class parents used their political sophistication and influence to pressure the school board to rule in ways that advantaged pupils who were already advantaged. This pattern is not unique (Oakes et al, 1996).

The issue which precipitated the parental revolt in Cottonwood (Brouillette, 1996) raises another aspect of context which affect schools and classrooms. Population shifts in the Cottonwood district resulted in the building of a new school, Sagebrush High School. As with the new schools I described previously, it opened with much fanfare and controversy. Its middle class location and white middle class pupil population made it attractive to parents. Shifts to the new school created problems of declining enrolment and the related problems of shrinking course offerings in the established schools. The population of the pupils who remained in the established schools was predominately lower socio-economic and from minority groups in Cottonwood. These schools began to experience some of the demographically created pressures described by Grant (1988) and Smith and his colleagues (1987). Teachers in the established schools, who saw their working conditions change dramatically were publicly critical of the Sagebrush staff, programme and its female principal. Sagebrush after only two years was already experiencing symptoms of the onset of the 'attrition of change' for a new school.

The mandating of school councils in many jurisdictions and the augmented role of school governors in the United Kingdom have increased interest in macro-political issues (MacBeath, et al 1992; Earley, 1994; Barber et al, 1995). There is a great deal of advice on community related issues but not a great deal of research to help school leaders attend to what is becoming an increasingly major part of their jobs.

Teachers' union context

Another contextual area on which there is relatively little research is the role of unions in the life of schools. Teachers' unions or federations are a significant and somewhat elusive component of the contextual landscape for most schools and school Boards. As Mirel (1994) reports, the Bensonville unions reversed their original support of the reform project in order to preserve teacher contractual rights and as a result came to stand for the status quo. This is not a unique position for unions. Some observers argue that unions place too much emphasis on economic and political priorities to the detriment of school programs (Kerchner and Koppich, 1993; Louis, 1990). Others contend that collective bargaining creates the perception of teachers as labourers rather than professional workers (McDonnell and Pascal, 1988; Johnson, 1984; Mitchell and Kerchner, 1983). This line of argument blames unions for formalising lines between administrators and teachers, and the standardisation of teaching tasks.

At the local level, there is ambivalence about union roles. Bascia (1994) looked at case studies of individual schools and found that the better "the match between union strategies and professional community, the more likely the union will secure teacher commitment as well as enhance the practical and intellectual value of the professional community for its members" (p.8). Conversely, she reports that:

In situations where district-level concerns are out of synch with the conditions and issues of a particular school faculty, there may be differences between teachers' values and occupational needs and issues of relevance to union leaders. These differences are probably more likely in larger districts . . . (p. 67)

In Ontario, where union membership is mandatory, this ambivalence within the secondary teachers' federation has been a feature of its history over the past 25 years (Martel 1995).

The research evidence is fairly clear that schools can only be understood in their context (Hallinger and Murphy, 1986; Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993). Attempts to determine effectiveness from one country to another, for example, have for the most part been unsuccessful (Reynolds et al, 1994). Broadly based restructuring efforts have made little difference in classrooms (Cohen, 1995; Elmore, 1995; Gerwitz et.al, 1996). Different contexts bring diverse and often contradictory values, belief and purposes for education. Successful reformers usually must work their way through a morass of conflicting and paradoxical purposes for change - school by school by school (Louis and Miles, 1990; Fullan, 1991).

Meaning

Bennis and Nanus (1985) state:

. . . all organizations depend on the existence of shared meanings and interpretations of reality, which facilitate action . . . an essential factor in leadership is the capacity to influence and organize meaning for the members of the organization (p. 39).

Fullan (1991) makes a similar point in the context of educational change:

The presence or absence of mechanisms to address the on-going problems of meaning - at the beginning and as people try out ideas - is crucial for success, because it is at the individual level that change does or does not occur (p. 45).

The question that arises, however, is whose meaning should prevail? Brouillette (1996) has summarised the four most common ways of viewing the purposes of education as humanist, social efficiency, developmentalist, and social meliorist. To the *humanist* the purpose of education is to prepare pupils for citizenship so that they understand the values, and traditions embodied in their societies' institutions. To this end, pupils must be sufficiently literate to communicate with their fellow citizens and have the knowledge necessary to comprehend current issues and cast their vote appropriately. In practice this has tended to be interpreted as an emphasis on the teaching of the liberal arts with an focus on the 'basics' - grammar, spelling, and an understanding of western, Eurocentric values and traditions.

To those who advocate *social efficiency*, the purpose of schools is to prepare pupils for jobs, and to contribute to the economic well-being of society as a whole. The concept of pupils as 'human capital' evolves from this point of view (Sweetland, 1997). As Brouillette (1996) suggests, business oriented politicians tend to focus on the non-college bound pupils and inquire into their employability. While this view places an emphasis on the basics and sees education as a very linear 'input-output' process, it does stress the need for vocational education.

The *developmentalist* position holds that education should help individual pupils to develop their personal potential "so that they are prepared to be creative, self-motivated

lifelong learners who are effective problem-solvers, able to communicate and collaborate with others, and to meet the varied challenges they will encounter in their adult lives” (p. 224). While humanists and developmentalists have similar aspirations for pupils, they diverge on where to put the emphasis in curricula. The humanist is much more concerned with forms and precision than the developmentalist. The developmentalist would entertain invented writing and focus more on the content and ideas of a pupils work than on the syntax and spelling. To focus too early on what they might see as cosmetics, they would argue, inhibits a pupil’s creativity and imagination.

The purpose of education to the *social meliorist* is to bring about a more just society, “through using the schools to help those children whose background puts them at risk, to get the resources they need to succeed, and through teaching all students about diverse cultures and ethnic heritages, thus helping them to grow into open-minded, tolerant adults” (p. 224). Those who advocate this view would see the humanist approach to be narrow, traditional, elitist, overly Eurocentric, and perpetuating the tyranny of the majority. In a similar vein they would view the social efficiency perspective as exploitive and “unthinking replication of social injustice”. The developmentalist view with its focus on individual growth and development, from a social meliorist point of view, tends to ignore the social context and social ills which prevent pupils from taking advantage of opportunities. The developmentalist emphasis on co-operation can easily mean co-optation with forces which should be confronted. These positions help to explain the challenge of developing shared meaning in a high school where all four purpose positions often co-exist somewhat uneasily. When one adds in the conflicting and sometimes inchoate views of a schools’ community, the notion of shared purpose becomes even more daunting.

The importance of 'shared meaning' is, however, well documented in the literature (Joyce and Showers, 1988; Rosenholtz, 1989; Louis and Miles, 1990; Fullan, 1993; Sammons et al, 1995). Many of the situations described in Chapter One, for example, in which schools and communities conflicted over school issues resulted from different perceptions of the purposes of education. In general, new schools tend to emphasise developmentalist and social meliorist goals. Conflict emerges when dominant community groups perceive that more traditional humanistic and social efficiency goals are subordinated or ignored (Fullan et al, 1972; Watts, 1977; Gold and Miles, 1981; Fletcher et al, 1985; Smith et al, 1987). Similarly, change within schools suffers when strongly held but divergent purposes conflict (Woods, 1979; Ball, 1981; Grant, 1988). It is clear, however that meaning cannot be imposed from outside. Hargreaves and his colleagues (1992) in their study of secondary schools' responses to the destreaming of the first year of high school found that the more academic and more affluent schools were most resistant to what they perceived was a social meliorist set of purposes which they considered more appropriate to culturally diverse communities.

In any change effort, teachers and schools should know where they are going, and broadly speaking, they should be agreed on where they are headed. Purposes matter a lot in teaching. Yet teachers cannot be given a purpose: purposes must come from within. Pursuing their own inspiring mission together is what can most help teachers turn their school around. The most positive approaches to change were where teachers faced overwhelming challenges in urban schools and were energised by the resolve to work on them together (Lightfoot, 1983; Louis and Miles, 1990; National Commission on Education, 1996).

Many teachers enter teaching because they care about children in particular, or contributing to social improvement in general. Often these purposes become submerged as teachers succumb to the daily classroom pressures and routines (Fullan, 1993). Teachers' purposes can also differ, leading to confusion and inconsistency for children and creating difficult or superficial staff relationships. It is important that teachers engage in dialogue about them, and that their purposes are somewhat convergent. Dialogue about and coalescence of purposes among teachers is a significant step towards the development of shared meanings.

For change agents, the change literature suggests that answers are required to the following questions among many others:

- does the change have a clear moral purpose (Sergiovanni, 1992a)?
is the purpose an imposed one or does it come from within (Fullan, 1993)?
- are purposes surrounding the change fragmented or do they cohere into broadly common vision (Barth, 1990)?
- is the change demonstrably connected to purposes of teaching, learning, and caring in classrooms in ways that matter for teachers (Newman and Wehlage, 1995)?
- how do teachers connect with 'other people's children' with background and cultures that are different from the teacher's own (Delpit, 1988)?
- does the initiative provide a balance among competing policy directions of quality, equity and efficiency (Stoll and Fink, 1996)?

For this present study, the changes and shifts of meaning over 25 years as the school responded to various internal and external contextual factors provides insight into the 'attrition of change'.

Leadership

The importance of the leader in the management of meaning in an organisation is one of the few concepts in the management literature about which there is fairly consistent agreement (Bennis and Nanus, 1985; Fullan, 1993; Stoll and Fink, 1996). In recent times, management literature has referred to managers as people who do things efficiently and leaders who do things effectively (Bennis and Nanus, 1985). Others have described transactional leaders as those who use conventional, rather political means to get the job done, and transformational leaders as those who unite their associates through a shared vision to achieve organisational goals (Burns, 1978). Certainly the effective schools literature is in general agreement on the importance of the principal's role as an instructional leader (Fullan, 1985; Mortimore et. al. 1988; Rosenholtz, 1989; Smith and Andrews, 1989; Louis and Miles, 1990). Leadership as defined by much of this literature places inordinate pressure on a few leaders in a crisis. The concept of visionary leaders propounded by the management literature (Bennis and Nanus, 1985), however, requires these few to have extraordinary foresight (Stacey, 1993).

More recently, scholars have moved beyond identifying the components of leadership that seem to produce results to more global or holistic approaches which encompass both the rational and non-rational aspects of leadership. Some have applied Burns' (1978) concept of transformational leadership to education. This style of leadership includes the pursuit of common goals, empowerment, maintenance of a collaborative culture, teacher development and problem-solving (Leithwood, 1992). These qualities are reflected in teacher-led professional development committees and staff-led school planning teams.

The clear implication in much of this literature is that attending to management or operating in transactional ways - exchanging services for rewards - is clearly inferior to being a 'transformational' leader, who is people oriented and focuses on transforming the beliefs and attitudes of followers.

Stacey (1993) provides a different image of leadership by describing the needs of leaders to manage in times of diversity, complexity and unpredictability. In effect, he suggests that traditional views of leadership which are based on a rational, predictable, linear world are relatively useless in a society which is becoming increasingly 'chaotic'. In his Managing Chaos he argues for the development of learning organisations which are sufficiently prepared and flexible to respond to an unknown and unknowable future.

Others suggest alternative approaches to leadership which are more specific to education. Sergiovanni (1992) advocates an approach which encourages teachers to unify around moral purposes. Block (1993) suggests that the future requires stewardship not leadership. "Stewardship is defined . . . as the willingness to be accountable for the well-being of the larger organization by operating in service rather than control, of those around us . . . it is accountability without control or compliance" (xx). Deal and Peterson (1994) criticise the artificial debate between management and leadership and suggest that schools require leadership which blends the technical skills of an engineer and the creative imagination of the artist. They declare that:

High performing organizations have both order and meaning, structure and values. They achieve quality at reasonable costs. They accomplish goals while attending to core values and beliefs. They encourage both fundamentals and

fun. They embrace the dialectic between expression of values and accomplishment of goals. They encourage both leadership and management, symbolic behavior and technical activity (p. 9).

While these images are useful, they do not capture the complexity and challenge of school leadership. Most school leaders play many roles in the course of the day; they are at once administrators, politicians, parents, counsellors, publicists and transactional leaders and on occasion, transformational and moral leaders. Recently, a colleague and I have suggested still another approach which reflects both the rational and non rational, the predictable and unpredictable aspects of leadership in schools, and recognises the multiple roles school leaders are required to fulfil (Stoll and Fink, 1996). It is a view which also captures both the personal and professional aspects of school leadership. We have called this approach invitational leadership. Invitations are messages which communicate to others that they are able, responsible and worthwhile (Purkey and Novak, 1984).

Leadership therefore “is about communicating invitational messages to individuals and groups with whom leaders interact in order to build and act on a shared and evolving vision of enhanced educational experiences for pupils” (Stoll and Fink, 1996, p.109). We argue that leadership of schools should be dynamic, holistic, flexible and humane. This vision is quite at odds with leadership in many schools, particularly secondary schools.

The leadership structure of most secondary schools would appear to be inimical to the development of school-wide learning communities (Hargreaves et al, 1992). Decision-making lodged in a management group, or a small cadre of department heads, tends to inhibit efforts at school based decision-making (Wohlstetter, 1995). Most secondary schools, and school systems are not only ‘balkanized’ by the departmental structure, they

also are hierarchical and bureaucratic. It is very clear that present legislation and organisational structures create schools in which the struggle for 'turf' is paramount. As Sarason (1990) has stated:

Teachers, principals, supervisors, curriculum specialists, superintendents, members of boards of education, . . . with rare exception, those who belong to these groups think and perceive in terms of parts and not a complicated system, *their* parts, *their* tasks, *their* problems, *their* power or lack of it (p. 24).

Broadening decision-making to involve teachers can contribute to a reduction of these internal rivalries, (Wohlstetter, 1995; Walter and Duncan Gordon Charitable Foundation, 1995). The danger, as Fullan (1995) points out, is that teachers who become involved in change initiatives or participate in teacher decision-making committees can become distanced from their colleagues. Teacher participation in decision-making is not a panacea. Conley (1991) suggests there are three decisional states related to teacher participation: deprivation, saturation and equilibrium. How does a school find 'equilibrium'? How does a school design a system which responds both to the bureaucratic demands of the larger context while meeting teacher needs for participation? Fullan (1996 b) states: "The key issues . . . are twofold: broadening the leadership roles of more and more teachers; while reshaping the culture of the school that produces in-built collaboration involving all (or the majority of) teachers" (p. 9). This solution suggests a complicating paradox. Structures such as departments, subject specialisation and inflexible timetables in secondary schools obstruct more collaborative cultures. In addition, teacher cultures of privatism, individualism, and academic specialisation also tend to preserve divisive structures.

Structure

Many of the reform movements which have taken place over the past number of years have concentrated on changing structures as ways to effect behavioural change among teachers and pupils. Structure is about the use of time and space and the definition and arrangement of roles and relationships in an organisation such as a school. Soja (1989) writes:

Just as space, time and matter delineate and encompass the essential qualities of the physical world, spatiality, temporality and social being can be seen as the abstract dimensions which together comprise all facets of human existence . . . Each of these abstract existential dimensions come to life as a social construct which shapes empirical reality and is simultaneously shaped by it . . . (p. 25).

In a sense, these structures create organisational coherence and order in much the same way as grammar makes language intelligible. Tyack and Tobin (1994) have used this metaphor to describe the relationship of change and continuity in American educational history. They conclude that changes have come and gone, yet the essential 'grammar of schooling' remains unaltered. As they state "habit is a labor saving device" (p. 476). Cuban (1988) explains this pattern by discriminating between first and second order changes. First order changes try to make "what already exists more efficient and effective, without disturbing the basic organizational features, without substantially altering the way adults and children perform their roles" (p. 342). "Second order changes seek to alter the fundamental ways in which organizations are put together." (p. 342).

For the most part, Cuban (1988) contends that change in schools over time has been of the first order variety, and efforts at second order change have been uncoordinated and generally short-lived. This, in part, explains the persistence of the prevailing length of the school day, the length of the school year, and generally the temporal cycle of schools which has remained relatively unchanged over long periods of time.

Time

Much of the rhetoric of school reform has been about more effective use of time. As the United States National Education Commission on Time and Learning (1994) has stated:

Learning (in our schools) is a prisoner of time. For the past 150 years . . . states have held time constant and let learning vary . . . Our people and the people involved in them . . . are captives of clock and calendar. The boundaries of student growth are defined by schedules, bells, buses and vacations instead of standards for students and learning (p. 7).

Critics have compared western educational systems invidiously to eastern societies, where pupils spend more time in school (Stevenson, 1992). Moreover, western schools are criticised for inappropriate use of the time that is available. Commentators have argued that the allocated time for pupil learning does not translate into pupils' time-on-task. In turn, time-on-task does not necessarily mean academic learning time, that is the time in which pupils are actually learning (Berliner, 1990). These arguments have been used to lengthen the school day, the school year, mandate curriculum, and impose a multiplicity

of tests to ensure compliance. The irony is that the law of unintended consequences sets in, and teachers spend more time on non-instructional issues related to government mandates (Barber, 1995). These and other efforts to foster change through alterations of time have ironically had limited impact on classrooms (Elmore, 1995) because teachers do not have the time to respond (Adelman and Pringle, 1995). It is quite clear, for example, that teachers need time for staff development (Fullan, 1991, Hargreaves, 1994; Stoll and Fink, 1996; Hargreaves et al, 1996), yet paradoxically, time is usually not available. Watts and Castle (1993) conclude from a major change project in which they were involved, that a clear finding “is that faculty development is necessary to student empowerment. And faculty development takes time; time to collaborate, communicate, ponder, and reflect with others is essential” (p. 307). Time alone, however, does not necessarily promote greater degrees of staff collaboration although it is a prerequisite for it to occur (Hargreaves, 1989).

Space

Spaces are as important as time in supporting or inhibiting change. As Giddens (1984) has suggested:

... human beings do ‘make their own geography’ as much as they ‘make their own history’. That is to say, spatial configurations of social life are just as much a matter of basic importance to social theory as are the dimensions of temporality (p. 363).

The traditional egg carton design of school buildings has promoted cultures of isolation and independence (Hargreaves, 1994). Similarly, marginalised subject areas have often been built on 'the margins' of schools. Technical areas in Ontario are a good example. When the federal government transferred millions of dollars to the provinces for technical education in the 1960s, Ontario entered a few years of furious building construction. Almost invariably, these new additions were added to existing schools and were generally located far from the heart of the school. This distance is not only physical, in many schools, it is social as well. A similar pattern exists with guidance counsellors (pastoral care workers) who often have their own separate offices in the general proximity of the administrative offices. This tends to accentuate the division between classroom and non-classroom teachers (Grant, 1988), while opening up the possibility of guidance becoming an extension of administration (King et al, 1988).

Open space, comprehensive schools, vocational schools, staff development schools, 'lighthouse schools', work experience and co-operative education, are but a few examples of alterations in space designed to promote different behaviours on the parts of teachers and pupils. Space allocations, for example, can often have 'unintended' results from those anticipated. Department offices provide places for teachers to work, relate and socialise. They can also reinforce 'balkanized' cultures. Staff rooms designed to bring people together can also prove divisive, as various micro-political or social groupings stake out their territory. A colleague in his workshops asks participants to draw a map of the staff room and describe who sits where as a way to introduce the micro-political aspects of a school. The activity seldom, if ever, fails to make its point.

Change also includes alterations in the roles and relationships of pupils, teachers and parents. Virtually every innovative school described in Chapter One endeavoured through changes in time and space relationships to alter the ethos of the school and make the school more pupil-centred (Fullan et al, 1972; Watts, 1977; Gold and Miles, 1981; Fletcher et al, 1985; Smith et al, 1987). The move to comprehensive schools in the United Kingdom in which the tripartite system of selective grammar schools, secondary modern and in some cases vocational schools were to be merged, was an attempt to break down stereotypes and promote greater equity for pupils. But old habits died hard. As both Woods' (1979) and Ball's (1981) studies demonstrate, changing structures through mandate does not necessarily change the roles and relationships in schools. In Ontario, efforts to change relationships among pupils, and between pupils and teachers through destreaming have experienced great difficulties (Hargreaves et al, 1992). Teachers, through within-class grouping, have found ways to shape the new structure into something similar to the old 'grammar'. School planning teams designed to empower broader segments of the school staff often face opposition from entrenched groups of department heads. Parent councils intended to provide more opportunities to influence the school have on occasion been thwarted by a school staff or its principal, or divided the parent community into those who are 'in' and those who are 'out' (Mortimore et al, 1988). These few examples provide evidence that changes in time, space, and roles and relationships are fundamental to school change, but without attention to culture, change agents who attend only to structure are, in Fullan's (1991) words, 'doomed to tinkering'.

Culture

While there is little evidence to suggest that structural changes alone make a significant difference to the change process, structural changes are important to provide opportunities for cultural changes (Miles and Huberman, 1984; Louis and Miles, 1990, Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves, 1994). Structure and culture are inextricably intertwined, and successful changes in both tend to be concurrent (Fullan, 1993). Contemporary change strategies such as school effectiveness tend to look at the parts of schools rather than the interconnections (Hargreaves, 1994; Stoll and Fink, 1996; Fink and Stoll, forthcoming). Similarly school improvement processes tend to focus on rather linear rational planning models which are useful in a predictable world but less valuable when the future is unknowable (Stacey, 1995). Neither school effectiveness nor school improvement alone has proven satisfactory in effecting change (Fink and Stoll, forthcoming). The reason, as Little (1982) explains, is that:

the school as a workplace has proven extraordinarily powerful. Without denying differences in individual skills, interests, commitment, curiosity or persistence, the prevailing patterns of interactions and interpretations in each building demonstrably create certain possibilities and certain limits (p. 338).

Fullan (1993) goes so far as to suggest that what is needed in contemporary change efforts is not restructuring but reculturing. “Changing formal structure is not the same as changing norms, habits, skills and beliefs” (p. 49).

Wheatley (1993) refers to ‘fields’ in the natural world as unseen forces whose presence is known only through their effects. Magnetism and gravity are two examples. Culture is

an example of a 'field' in the social world. Change agents tend to concentrate on tangible structures to the exclusion of those forces which are unseen, but represent the interconnections and interrelationships in the organisation that make the organisation whole. The reason of course is that not only is culture hard to define, but difficult to identify, and difficult to change. Perhaps the simplest definition is that of Deal and Kennedy (1983) who describe culture "as the way we do things around here". Culture is a "way of life" (D. Hargreaves, 1995). It defines reality for those who work in a social organisation; it also provides support, identity and "forms a framework for occupational learning" (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 165).

David Hargreaves (1995) offers one way to analyse a total school culture. His model is based on two dimensions, the instrumental domain, which includes social control and an orientation to the task, and the expressive domain, which includes social cohesion through the maintenance of positive relationships. Four type of school cultures sit in different and extreme places on the four dimensions:

- traditional - low social cohesion, high social control - custodial, formal, unapproachable;
- welfarist - low social control, high social cohesion - relaxed, caring, cosy;
- hothouse - high social control, high social cohesion - claustrophobic, pressured. controlled;

- anomic - low social cohesion, low social control, - insecure, alienated, isolated, 'at risk'.

He proposes a fifth culture, that of an effective school:

- effective - optimal social cohesion, optimal social control - fairly high expectations, support for achieving standards.

As he explains, schools tend to fit into one category or another, but schools display characteristics of more than one type. In fact, large schools may display several different cultural types. I return to this model in the discussion of culture and Lord Byron High School.

Andy Hargreaves (1994) suggests another way to look at school culture - from the perspective of the teachers working in a school. He considers the most pervasive sub-culture is that of teacher individualism. Reinforced by self-contained classrooms, teachers operate in isolation, not only from one another but also from ideas, and outside influences - not only is blame avoided, so is support. This individualism is distinguished from individuality - the power to exercise independent discretionary judgement - and solitude - "a withdrawal to delve into one's personal resources; to reflect retreat and regroup" (p.180)

He describes four other fairly distinctive types of teachers' sub-cultures. Collaborative working cultures tend to be spontaneous because they emerge from the teachers themselves as a social group. They are also voluntary since collaboration is initiated by teachers in response to perceived needs. Since teachers work together on projects to

which they are committed it is development oriented. Collaboration is characterised by informality and unpredictability. The outcomes of collaboration which is teacher directed and flexible in the use of time and space, are uncertain and therefore unpredictable (pp. 192-193).

A third type of culture Hargreaves (1994) calls 'contrived collegiality'. It differs from a collaborative culture in that it is initiated and regulated by management. It is therefore usually compulsory. Staff members are compelled to work jointly as opposed to doing so of their own free will, and to work together to implement the mandates of others. Management, therefore, determines meeting times and places to ensure a high degree of predictability of outcomes from the teachers' efforts.

Hargreaves (1994) explains that the fourth type, a 'balkanized' culture, has low permeability because sub groups within the school are isolated from one another. At the same time the structure and membership of each sub-group has high permanence over time. People, therefore, become attached to the sub culture such as a secondary school department, often to the detriment of the school as a whole. Teacher sub cultures are not only a source of loyalty but also "repositories of self interest". Sub cultures compete for power within the larger environment which results in some being more influential than others (pp. 213-215).

Hargreaves' (1994) fifth cultural type borrows Toffler's (1990) metaphor of the 'moving mosaic'. In this sub-culture, teachers group and re-group based on problem-solving requirements. The emphasis is on flexibility and teachers' continuous learning. This

culture is characterised by collaboration, opportunism, adaptable partnerships and alliances.

Whereas both David Hargreaves, (1995) and Andy Hargreaves (1994) concentrate on the ‘forms’ of culture, Deal and Kennedy (1982) provide a useful way to analyse the ‘content’ of an organisation’s culture. Deal and Kennedy suggest that a culture is composed of the shared values which are espoused and acted upon. Some schools advocate child-centred learning, others emphasise preparation for the world of work, and still others stress the traditional humanist values of the academic school. To understand the culture it is useful to identify the heroes, both staff and pupils. How could one study the famous Summerhill school without knowing about J.S. Neil (1962, 1966)? School rituals and ceremonies tell an observer a great deal about who and what is valued in the school. In some schools in Texas for example, where football defines small communities, the athletes are honoured at pep rallies and given time off school for practice, while academics and the arts do not enjoy this kind of support. The stories people tell provide “concrete examples of values and heroes who triumphed by following the culturally prescribed ways” (Deal, 1987, p. 6). Each school has its informal priest/esses, gossips, spies and story tellers “whose primary role is to reinforce and protect the existing way” (p. 6) and provide clues to the cultural networks which communicate the cultural norms to newcomers to the school. This structure was used in my interview schedule to delve into the culture of Lord Byron. My analysis of culture in the school, however, attempts to integrate both the content and the form of culture.

Teachers’ Work and Teachers’ Lives

If culture is the shared or collective ‘way we do things around here’, the life history approach described in Chapter Two provides still another analytical way to look at the ‘attrition of change’ in Lord Byron - from the perspective of the changing lives and the nature of the work of its many teachers over time. “To change the teacher is to change the person the teacher is” (Hargreaves, 1991a, pp. 255-256). A level of analysis which until recently has been overlooked in discussions about change has been the personal and biographical factors of teachers. As Goodson (1992) has argued:

. . . it would seem that professional practices are embedded in wider life concerns. We need to listen closely to their views on the relationship between ‘school life’ and ‘whole life’ for in that dialectic crucial tales about careers and commitments will be told (p. 16).

Ball and Goodson (1985) outline the evolution of the research view of the teacher. They describe the research image of teachers in the 1960s as ‘shadowy figures’ known only through large scale surveys which focused on the teacher’s role. In the late 1960s, and the 1970s, researchers using case study methods (D. Hargreaves, 1967; Lacey, 1970; Woods, 1979) examined schooling as a social process and began to look at teacher practice, particularly the ways in which teachers labelled and sorted pupils. “Research thus shifted from blaming the pupil to blaming the teacher” (Ball and Goodson, 1985, p. 7). A third generation of research examined contextual factors (Ball, 1981; Smith et al, 1987) which impinge on teachers work and lives. Teachers were transformed from ‘villains’ to ‘victims’ or to some, ‘dupes’ of the system. Goodson (1981) opened another direction when he argued that teachers were active agents making their own histories and he has advocated more contextually sensitive research. Recent literature on the role of

women in education (Acker, 1983; Shakeshaft, 1993) teacher life cycles (Sikes, 1985; Huberman, 1992), belief systems (Louden, 1991), and school culture and teachers' lives (Nias et al, 1989; Rosenholtz, 1989; Hargreaves, 1994) have provided insight into the connections between teachers' lives and their work. As Hargreaves (1991b) has written however:

If the research on teachers' lives has one flaw, it is the tendency to explain the relationship between teachers' lives and work in a one-sided way: with the life affecting the work but not vice versa. At its worst, this bias can lend (unintended) support to the deficit-based explanations of teachers' problems when they may actually have their roots in the conditions and management of the workplace (p. 253).

Hargreaves (1995), however, has also cautioned against listening to *the* teacher's voice as though it were monolithic and the only voice worth listening to. The present study, therefore, listened to a cross section of voices from within the school and across the South system to determine the interaction between teachers' and principals' lives and their work. It became very clear as my interviews proceeded that participation in the Lord Byron experience had a powerful effect upon teachers' lives, and conversely, the changing nature of teachers' lives and their professional contexts influenced their working lives. Since the two constructs of *work* and *lives* were interdependent and interactive, I treated them as one larger construct. The following discussion, therefore, focuses on concepts derived from the literature on teachers' lives and teachers' work which have particular relevance for Lord Byron.

Life cycle research (Sikes, 1985, Huberman, 1992) is particularly applicable to a longitudinal study of a school. Over 25 years, people aged, their personal circumstances changed. They changed jobs; they left the school; they sought promotion; they left the profession, their attitudes and values shifted. Sikes (1985) identifies five career phases:

- Phase one is the 21 -28 age group. She calls this phase ‘entering the adult world’.

At this stage, new teachers are trying out teaching before making a career decision.

Their immediate goal is to cope with the job. Huberman (1992) indicates that this phase is characterised by the teacher’s preoccupation with self and whether he or she is up to the job. It is a phase in which the beginning teacher attempts to

negotiate the difference between ideals and the daily reality of teaching. This

survival theme coexists with the teacher’s discovery of his or her own classroom,

pupils, and programme.

- Phase two involves the 28-33 age group. This is the ‘thirty transition’ when teachers decide whether teaching will be their career direction. It corresponds to what Huberman (1988) calls the ‘stabilising phase’ in which teachers become comfortable in their repertoire in the classroom and their commitment to the profession. This, he suggests, is more difficult for upper secondary teachers who tend to be better educated and keep their options open longer. Commitment to the profession, however, means affiliation with an occupational community. Teachers in this age group according to Sikes (1985) tend to become more interested in

pedagogy as their links to their university days and their subjects become more remote.

- Phase three includes the 30–40 age group. As Sikes (1985) indicates throughout the thirties the conjunction of experience and a relatively high level of physical and intellectual ability means that in terms of energy, involvement, ambition and self confidence, many are at their peak (p. 48). Huberman (1992) describes this phase as one of experimentation and activism. Teachers at this stage try to increase their impact, face system limitations, and look for challenges. “The implicit theme here is the newly emerging concern with teachers growing stale in their profession, a malady one sees among older peers” (p. 125).
- Phase four, the 40–50/ 55 age group is a phase in which teachers take stock of their careers. They tend to become more relaxed and self-accepting. Huberman (1992) suggests that they move from the frenetic pace of their earlier careers in which diminishing energy is counter-balanced by a greater sense of self-confidence, self-acceptance and ‘serenity’. It can also become an age of conservatism, nostalgia and dogmatism. For some men it can be a difficult period. Prospects for promotion are gradually disappearing. Women, however, with their families well underway, often begin to apply for leadership positions. Teachers in this age group are “often authority figures, having taken on a role of maintainer of standards and guardian of school traditions” (Sikes, 1985, p. 52). Both Sikes and Huberman note a pattern of growing conservatism among some teachers as they move into their final career phase. The more positive want to focus on a grade level or a subject or a particular type of pupil rather than assuming major leadership roles in the school.

They will support but not initiate change efforts. Others, disenchanted or disappointed with the direction of their careers or past change initiatives, will disengage and some will become active blocks to change efforts.

- Phase five is the 50/55 plus age groups. Huberman suggests that towards the end of a career, disengagement occurs as teachers look to post-teaching pursuits. For many teachers, they continue serenely to focus on their teaching, confident of their own abilities and enjoying the rewards of working with young people. This age group, however, is one in which teacher ‘burnout’ becomes a particular problem for schools as many older teachers experience less energy, less activism, less involvement, less idealism, more scepticism, more pessimism.

The implication of ‘life cycle’ research is that what motivates and inspires a young teacher to adopt innovative approaches to teaching will be significantly different than that of a ‘50 something’ teacher. Similarly, the challenges which teachers found exhilarating at 30 may well be just plain exhausting at 55. The ageing of a school staff can have a significant impact on an entire school’s willingness, and indeed ability to continue to be an innovative organisation.

Gender Issues

Acker (1995) suggests that the term ‘career’ needs redefinition for both men and women “to capture something of the fragile quality of the career as compromise or bargain at a moment in time” (p. 30). She suggests that life cycle literature is generally deficient in describing the life cycle of female teachers and tends to explain the imbalances in

women's leadership opportunity to the demands of family and domestic concerns. She and others (Shakeshaft, 1993; Edwards, 1994) argue that women are caught in a paradox. They are often turned down for leadership opportunities because they do not have the required experiences, while at the same time they are generally denied the opportunity to gain the requisite experience necessary to apply for formal leadership roles. Acker also observes that in secondary schools, men tend to be involved with the organisational aspects of the school and women in the pastoral care side of the school. This, she asserts, gives men an advantage

There is evidence that the pastoral care type of background combined with women's instructional leadership skills, and their ability to develop an inclusionary school community provide them with superior preparation for educational leadership roles. Shakeshaft (1993) offers four answers to her rhetorical question : "If women are as good or better than men, why aren't there more of them as school administrators?" (p. 49). First she argues that the people who hire leaders systematically discriminate against women. "Most of the reason why women do not become school administrators can be explained by understanding that women are not valued as much as men and that bias results in negative attitudes and practices towards women aspiring to be school administrators" (p. 50). Edwards (1994) states that in a British context "the single most significant barrier to women in management was the existence of the men's club network and male prejudice" (p. 4). Both Edwards and Shakeshaft contend that women lack the networks and support systems to help in the search for promotion. Women still carry the burden for child care and homemaking. "The career break for child care reasons still poses a devastating career hurdle . . . Schools have not proven flexible or women friendly organisations; they remain bureaucratically structured and geared to male career

models” (Edwards, 1994, p. 4). Shakeshaft (1993) further indicates that females have lower self confidence than males. Females will only apply for jobs for which they are qualified, whereas men will apply regardless of qualifications, which explains why there are always more male applicants, particularly at secondary levels. Moreover, females tend to internalise failure and feel that it is because they were not good enough whereas men will externalise failure. On average, it takes women four interviews to land a promotion which, Shakeshaft (1987) states, is why many give up. The final reason Shakeshaft offers for the dearth of women in educational leadership roles is their alleged lack of aspiration to leadership positions. Studies, she contends, do not support this view, but it has become part of the ‘folklore’. Women generally are not as high profile as men and are given fewer opportunities to exercise informal leadership. “To further complicate matters, women have been taught that a womanly virtue is modesty; thus women are more likely to give others credit for the work they have done” (p. 52). This discussion raises the question of what conditions in a school and system support female leadership. It is an issue to which I return in the chapters which follow.

Intensification

Another area in which Acker (1995) challenges conventional thinking from a feminist point of view is the ‘intensification thesis’. Over time, governments have increasingly mandated significant changes in schools which have had the effect, according to some authors, of deskilling teachers and particularly women teachers (Gerwitz et al, 1996). Attempts to coerce teachers to change through assessment systems or other policy initiatives have, according to some, resulted in the intensification of teachers’ work (Apple, 1986), the deskilling of teachers (Apple and Tettlebaum, 1986), guilt

(Hargreaves, 1994) and 'burnout' (Byrne, 1994). Efforts to use school based management as a vehicle to deliver government policies have met with teacher indifference, cynicism (Smyth, 1991) and divided teachers from their principals (Bishop and Mulford, 1996). Apple (1986) in particular sees these governmental efforts as the work of men trying to control the work of women. In effect he sees these efforts as part of an on-going governmental strategy to proletarianise women. Teachers, women in particular, expend extra effort to effect change in a misguided notion that this 'intensity' is what is required to be a professional. Acker (1995) challenges this interpretation. She suggests that governmental reforms do not just involve low-level trivial activities but rather require higher level skills to rethink curriculum, pedagogy and teacher collaboration. Acker contends that it is time "to stop generalizing about all (women) teachers and give them credit for being able to distinguish among 'good' and 'bad' forms of intensification" (p. 110). Hargreaves (1991b) offers a similar view when he suggests that the time and effort teachers "commit to their teaching and preparation comes not so much from grudging compliance with external demands as from dedication to doing a good job and providing effective care within a work context that is diffusely defined and has no clear criteria for successful completion" (p.13). It would appear that feelings of intensification affect some teachers more than others. What some teachers may view as professional challenge others view as top-down pressure. Intensification seems to be tied more closely to the life and career cycles of more mature teachers who have assumed more responsibilities and are experiencing a decline in physical powers. A shared staff sense of the increased intensification of work may well be a symptom of the attrition of change in a school.

Teacher Burnout

Feelings of intensification unrelieved by professional rewards can lead to teacher burnout.

This is a topic of considerable contemporary interest, particularly in North America.

Byrne's (1994) comprehensive survey of the literature on the topic indicates that

'burnout' is a multi-dimensional construct comprised of three distinct but related facets,

emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and reduced personal accomplishment. In

developing a model of teacher burnout she provides the following useful list of examples

of factors which affect teachers personal contexts. She describes the following

organisational factors:

- role conflicts which result from conflicting demands such as demands for both quality and equity in the classroom;
- role ambiguity which is lack of clarity about the teachers' obligations, rights, status, and/or accountability, among these are the custodial and supervisory functions which are added to teaching assignments;
- work overload, not only in terms of hours of involvement but also in terms of the complexity of trying to meet so many, often conflicting, demands;
- classroom climate such as discipline problems, student apathy, and student abuse of teachers " bears critically on teachers' attitudes toward teaching" (Byrne, p. 649);
- decision-making which either ignores or permits minimal teacher input; and

- lack of social support from both administrators and peers.

Byrne also describes two personal factors which affect teachers attitudes toward their roles. First, teachers who feel powerless to control events which affect their working lives are candidates for burnout. Among these needs are control and access to resources seen necessary to ensure success for pupils. Firestone and Pennell (1993) list five different types of resources which act as 'hygiene factors' (Herzberg, 1976) for teachers: an orderly environment, administrative support, adequate physical resources, adequate instructional resources and reasonable workloads (pp. 508-509).

Byrne's research also indicates that:

it seems apparent that self-esteem is a critical and controlling factor in the predisposition of teachers to burnout. In addition to having an important and direct effect on perceptions of personal accomplishment, self-esteem appears to function as an essential mediator variable through which effects of environment-based organizational factors filter (p. 667).

Teacher self esteem or self concept is a function of a teacher's self perceptions (Purkey and Novak, 1984). Their perceptions of self are influenced by their responses to career cycles, gender expectations and aspirations, the changing nature of their work and the pressures which in some create burnout. A number of studies identified in Chapter One described symptoms of burnout in new and innovative schools; for example, frustration with criticism (Moon, 1983; Fletcher et al, 1985), unappreciated work effort (Gold and Miles, 1981; Anderson and Stieglebauer, 1990), and changed life cycle pressures (Evans,

1983). In combination, these aspects of teachers' work and lives provide an insightful lens through which to view the conditions which affected teachers and other staff members at Lord Byron.

Conclusion

The literature on change in schools has evolved significantly in the past 15 years through four discreet, but interdependent phases. The school effectiveness approach was initially a response to the work of Coleman (1966) and Jencks (1972) and their colleagues who challenged the efficacy of schools by producing research that was generally interpreted as demonstrating that a pupil's socio-economic background determined success. Schools, therefore, merely confirmed or reconfirmed the relative advantage or disadvantage of each child. Simply stated, schools did not make much difference to pupils. This raised the very large research question: "do schools make a difference to students regardless of socio-economic (SES) background"? To answer this fundamental question, researchers internationally (Rutter et al; 1985; Mortimore et al, 1988; Teddlie and Stringfield, 1993), have attempted to demonstrate that schools do make a difference and there are characteristics which make some schools more effective than others. Critics have suggested that this research is limited by its focus on changing structures as the way to make schools more effective (Brown, 1995; Hamilton, 1996; Elliott, 1996).

The school improvement research which has developed concurrently with school effectiveness has focused on the change process itself. In practice, school improvement efforts have often meant a concentration on decentralised decision-making and school development planning (Fink and Stoll, forthcoming). Much of the school improvement

literature assumes that school change is linear and achievable through rational planning. Only in recent times has this literature identified purpose as a vital component of the change process (Fullan, 1993, Stoll and Fink, 1996, Hargreaves, Earl and Ryan, 1996).

A third change force has emanated largely from governments which have initiated changes in structures to force change in classroom practice. Legislation in many countries has changed the use of time, space, roles, and relationships. With all this reform activity, however, there is little evidence that ideologically-driven, 'top-down' change strategies are substantially altering life in classrooms (Cohen, 1995; McLaughlin, 1990) any more than they did in the 1970s. Elmore (1995) has concluded that changes "in structure are weakly related to changes in teaching practice, and therefore structural change does not necessarily lead to changes in teaching, learning, and student performance" (p. 25). He suggests that the relationship of structure to teaching practice is mediated by "relatively powerful forces such as the shared norms, knowledge and skills of teachers" (p. 26). In effect non-rational factors such as school culture must be attended to before altering structures.

While restructuring has brought short-term movement in educational practice it would appear that the quantum shift required to deal with rapidly changing societal forces will not result from restructuring alone (Elmore, 1995; Corcoran and Goetz, 1995). The 'grammar of schooling' remains fundamentally unchanged (Tyack and Tobin, 1994). Increasingly, academics and practitioners are looking at the non-structural aspects of schooling for 'doors' to educational change (Joyce, 1991). Fullan (1996a) suggests that restructuring needs to be balanced by what he and others (Hargreaves, 1994) have called reculturing.

Reculturing is “the process of developing new values, beliefs and norms. For systematic reform it involves building new conceptions about instruction . . . and new forms of professionalism for teachers . . . “. Fullan (1996a) links reculturing to restructuring when he states, “restructuring concerns changes in roles, structures, and other mechanisms that allow new cultures to survive” (p. 422). This relationship between structure and culture has been well-defined in the change literature (Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves, 1994; Stoll and Fink, 1996 Hargreaves, Earl and Ryan, 1996).

While structure and context are vital to understanding change processes in schools, change must be seen through multiple frames (Hargreaves et al 1996) or lenses in order to capture both its rational and non rational aspects. In effect, an approach which integrates the key insights from the various change initiatives is required. The addition of meaning, culture, leadership and the work and lives of teachers, therefore, provides a comprehensive view of school change and offers an ecological perspective on the dynamics of Lord Byron over the 25 years of this study.

Chapter 4

Creation and Experimentation: the History to 1975

The early 1970s was a unique era in the educational history of Ontario and the South Board of Education. For those of us who joined the staff of Lord Byron with a view to effecting change in the ‘deep structures’ of Ontario schooling, the times could not have been more propitious. Ontario was in the midst of a progressive era in education which created a context for the South Board and its reform-minded Director to initiate Lord Byron as an experimental ‘lighthouse’ school. As a teacher with eleven years of experience, I was well into phase three of Sikes’ teachers’ life cycle (1985). I was ready for ‘experimentation and activism’. Little did I or my colleagues realise the uniqueness of our opportunity. In this chapter, I will draw upon my historical sources described in Chapter Two to reconstruct the historical context of Byron’s first five years. To ensure a comprehensive view of the period I have adopted a layered approach which connects the history of Ontario, the South Board, Lord Byron High School and my own career.

History as context

“Social forces are human energies which, originating in individual motivations, coalesce into collective manifestations of power” (Gustavson, 1955, p. 28). Economic forces, technological forces and political forces among others, shape our daily existence. At certain points in history, combinations of these forces merge to produce dramatic, indeed,

revolutionary social changes. The Enlightenment of the 18th century is an example. Western civilisation, influenced by the Enlightenment has viewed history as a linear, predictable progression towards ever improving levels of civilisation. Most societal changes, however, occur almost imperceptibly and are scarcely visible from year to year and may not become obvious for decades. For example, the increased complexity of teaching in the 1990s has resulted from the cumulative effects of immigration policies, special education legislation, the women's movement, the changing economy, and technology, and many other social forces. To identify when the changes occurred, however, is difficult. Much of human history and particularly institutional history, therefore, seems to be more about continuity than about change. Most people operate on the premise that what has happened in the past will continue into the future. This kind of thinking makes life seem more predictable, stable and comfortable. The historian Gustavson (1955) captures this idea when he states that people:

are afraid of drastic innovations, partly because (they) prefer the familiar, and partly because the vested interests of most people are normally bound up with the existing set-up. Added to the weight against change is what might be called an institutional inertia, a proneness to keep the machinery running as in the past unless strong pressure for change materializes (p.72).

This general historical inertia when combined with contextual factors such as teachers' resistance (Fink and Stoll, forthcoming), bureaucratic conservatism (Louis and Miles, 1990), community wariness (Fletcher et al, 1985) and pupils' reluctance (Rudduck,

1991) helps to explain why the 'deep structures' (Cuban, 1988) of schooling in most secondary schools have changed very little in the past 25 years.

Lord Byron High School opened with the expressed purpose of not only challenging the structures of secondary education in Ontario, but also the curriculum, the teaching and the pupil assessment methods. Perhaps what was most innovative for the times was the philosophy espoused by its first principal, and in large measure adopted by the original staff. In a formal document of the period, the philosophy was stated as:

Our aspirations for Lord Byron are the development of a humane educational environment for students: a situation in which conduct and growth will develop from reason and mutual respect and trust. Only through an appreciation of these basic and individual needs can we achieve an educational experience which will enable students to realize their optimum potential. This experience, it is hoped, will be characterized by an atmosphere of continuous self-evaluation and improvement (School Priorities, 1974-75, p.1)

An experienced teacher more succinctly described the school as:

an attempt to rationalize education and have it make sense to the students' experience and there was a sense of being new and different and wanting to be innovative - so anything was possible (Interview, B.A. 1993).

While the climate of progressivism was current in Ontario in the early 1970s, the forces for continuity were mobilising to blunt, if not expunge the influence of a movement which called for more pupil-centred secondary schools. Teacher organisations saw a threat to teachers' traditional authority, principals decried a lack of order and control, parents expressed fears that new approaches might hurt their children's chances for success and politicians and the press reflected these growing doubts. In the context of Ontario, the South Board of Education and even the local community, the pedagogical, curricular, organisational and structural innovations introduced at Lord Byron were revolutionary and intimidating to groups who sought to preserve continuity in the educational system. In many ways this study is about the interplay of change (as represented by the progressive philosophy and innovative practices of the school), and continuity (as expressed by the teachers' union, teachers in other secondary schools, some school board members and some community representatives).

In 1970 the school had no institutional history. The first principal hired staff to an innovative concept and ensured a staff unified behind an educational vision. By 1995, however, Lord Byron had an extensive history which precipitated conflicts on staff around internal forces of change and continuity. To develop this theme and describe the larger context, in the remainder of this chapter, I briefly outline themes in Ontario's educational history from post world war II to the mid 1970s. I also describe the evolution of the newly formed South school district and then provide a broad outline of Byron's historical evolution. Finally, I outline my own professional life history to reveal my interrelationship with the complex forces of change and continuity which swirled around Lord Byron High School.

Ontario to the mid-1970s

Lord Byron's history can only be understood within the context of education in the province of Ontario and the school district in which it is located, the South Board of Education. Education in Canada is, for the most part, a provincial responsibility. While there are great similarities from province to province, it is difficult to speak of a Canadian educational system. Each province, particularly Quebec with its French-speaking majority, holds tightly to educational prerogatives. Ontario's system evolved over time from one which, in the nineteenth century, replicated the British system (Fink, 1970) to one which tended to blend British and American models (Stamp, 1982).

In Ontario, the Progressive Conservative party dominated the post World War II years. It had come to power in the 1944 election and would remain in control until the late 1980s. In its immediate post war manifestation, the Progressive Conservative party under Premier George Drew held closely to traditional educational values: classroom discipline, factual learning, love of country and the British empire, and Christian religious education. The progressivism of the 30s and early 40s which had emerged in the United States and to a lesser extent Ontario was "dashed on the rocks of Ontario traditionalism" (Stamp, 1982). The Minister of Education throughout the 1950s, William Dunlap, the son of a Baptist clergyman, brought his belief in "discipline, prudence and thrift" to his role. Moves towards decentralised curricula, for example were discouraged. Control of educational matters resided firmly in the hands of his

Department of Education. Dunlap's bureaucrats in Toronto decided everything of consequence in education from textbooks, to teacher education, to transportation policies. In 1951, Dunlap complained that "too many fads are creeping into education, these days, to the exclusion of down-to-earth fundamentals". The prime purpose of schooling, he declared, was to produce "loyal, intelligent, right-thinking, religious and freedom-loving citizens" and this could not be achieved "until the last shreds of this so-called progressive education are gone" (Stamp, 1982, p.193).

The reality, however, was that in spite of various Ministers' declarations about the enviable quality of Ontario's educational system, it was firmly elitist. Education was divided between elementary, kindergarten to grade 8, and secondary, grades 9 to 13. In 1950, for every 100 students who began school at 5 years of age, 44 reached grade 12 and 22 reached grade 13 and by 1955, 25 reached grade 13. Of these, approximately 20 would continue on to post secondary education and the high percentage of graduates came mainly from professional and managerial homes (Stamp, 1982). Only seven per cent of 18 to 24 year olds in Canada were in university in 1955 (Educational Statistics - Statistics Canada, 1972). By 1959, when I joined the teaching ranks in Ontario, pressure for change was building.

Throughout the 1950s change had occurred at a glacial pace. Continuation schools which merely added high school grades to the elementary years were phased out and replaced by district high schools which made the school bus a familiar part of the Ontario landscape. High schools focused on academic learning. A few facilities to teach technical and vocational programmes, such as Beale Technical School in London, Ontario

(Goodson and Anstead, 1993), were constructed in larger centres. For the most part students took a standard programme which included compulsory English, mathematics, science, French, physical education and history to the end of grade 12, when they received a Secondary School Graduation Diploma.

Optional subjects like art, music, Latin, home economics and industrial arts filled out the students' timetables. Pupils were assigned to classes according to their option choices. These classes were usually designated by a letter and number such as 9A or 10B or 12 E. Pupils in 10A were generally the most academic because they took French and Latin as options. A 12E class was made up of pupils who struggled and took industrial arts or home economics as an option. If there were 10 classes in grade 9 there might be 4 in grade 12 and 2 in grade 13. Attrition by grade 13 was very high. Classes moved as a group from subject to subject and teacher to teacher. The school day across the province was almost uniformly divided into eight, 40 minute periods. Pupils from grades 9 to 12 had virtually no free time.

Grade 13 was the pinnacle of the Ontario system. To advance to university, pupils had to complete nine grade 13 subjects, two of which had to be English composition and literature and also authors and grammar in one of French, Latin or German. The common grade 13 package was two English courses, two French courses, algebra, trigonometry, geometry, physics, and chemistry.

These courses guaranteed entry into virtually any university programme including Humanities and Social Sciences. By the late 1960s, this requirement was reduced to

six subjects with English as the only compulsory subject. Universities had their own idiosyncratic requirements for different courses. Pupils' results for grade 13 were almost totally dependent on their grades on the Department of Education examinations. Pupils' grades as determined by their teachers were only used in the event of illness at the time of the 'departmentals'. All exams from across the province were sent to Toronto to be marked on a standardised format, by teachers hired by the department. I marked history examinations in 1965 and was invited to join the marking committee which established the marking scheme for the 1966 examination. A university professor usually set the examination without any reference to classroom realities or consultation with teachers. It was often difficult to devise a marking scheme to ensure a reasonable number of pupils passed the exam. As a result, passing grades were often very low because the author of the exam sometimes had unrealistic expectations. As a result, an administrative decision was usually made by department officials to determine a respectable passing rate and marks were scaled accordingly. One year, when I was on the marking committee for grade 13 history, it became well-known that the passing grade in algebra was 28 per cent. By 1966, the number of papers to be marked centrally and the cost of the process resulted in the government's gradually eliminating the 'departmentals'. By 1968 therefore, teacher grades determined pupils' success and failure.

In 1960, the Canadian government had reacted to the perceived progress of Soviet technology by approving the Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act. It offered to fund 75 per cent of the construction and equipping of technical and vocational facilities if provinces provided the other 25 per cent. School districts across

Ontario saw a wonderful opportunity to expand and improve facilities and pressured the provincial government to participate. John Robarts, a former Minister of Education, became Ontario's Premier in 1961. He and his new Minister of Education William Davis, realised that this was an ideal way to add pupil spaces to accommodate the increasing Ontario enrolment. The addition of federal money which initiated a building boom throughout the province created a curriculum problem for secondary schools. To get the funds, the province had to design programmes to meet federal training requirements. A new programme was "hastily conceived" and imposed on the educational community "like a bolt from the blue" (Arvey, 1984, p. 269). The new 'Robarts plan' was drawn up by management officials at the University of Toronto with close ties to the corporate world and the cabinet (Curtis et al, 1992). A press release outlined the new syllabus:

Ontario's secondary school system will be re-organized on a three-branch basis . . . Commencing in September, 1962, pupils entering Grade 9 will be carefully interviewed and counselled, in close consultation with the parents and they will chose one of three branches in which to enrol . . . When he (sic) enters grade 10, the pupil will decide whether he wishes to proceed to higher education via the five year programme ending in grade 13, or whether his abilities and interests indicate that he should select the four-year programme and finish school after grade 12 (Quoted in Arvey, 1984, p. 272).

Schools were to offer five and four year programmes in each of the three streams, arts and science, business and commerce, and science, trades and technology. While

ostensibly equal, the reality was different. Only arts and science led to university - universities' admission criteria saw to that. The other streams became four year programmes and contributed to the sorting and sifting of pupils. While the old system sorted pupils by their option choices, decisions were usually spread over four years. Now pupils were designated at 15 years of age. It was very difficult once a programme had been chosen to move to a more challenging programme. The programme, however, did increase pupil retention in schools as their number in vocationally oriented programmes more than doubled between 1961 and 1966 (Curtis et al, 1992).

The post war years were ones of unparalleled economic growth in Canada and in Ontario in particular. In the 1960s, not only were public schools built or modified, but universities expanded with new universities like York, Trent and Brock being opened as well. To receive the graduates of the new technology programmes in high schools, colleges of applied arts and technology mushroomed across the province. Universities took over responsibility for teacher education, and 'normal schools' operated by the provincial department were closed. The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education opened amid much controversy as an educational research institution.

Canada enjoyed its centennial in 1967 amid great euphoria and self congratulation. The charismatic Pierre Trudeau became the Prime Minister of Canada in 1968. His style, intellect, and disdain for conventional politics and politicians seemed to infuse Canadians with optimism and pride. This changing spirit opened the doors of Ontario's educational thought to ideas which had been dormant for 30 years.

The rapid growth of the 1960s made education for employment seem less urgent, and student activism created a demand for liberalized and ‘relevant’ education. The progressive education movement insisted that school courses be tailored to the needs and interests of individuals and that students be allowed to learn co-operatively in groups (Curtis, 1992, p. 48).

Recognising that the Ontario system was out of step with the times, the Ontario cabinet authorised a Royal Commission to look into the educational system. The result was a revolutionary report entitled Living and Learning (1968), more commonly known as the Hall-Dennis report after its co-chairmen. From its opening phrase, “the truth shall make you free” (p. 9) to its concluding sentence “truth will make all men free” (p.175), the report advocated a radical rethinking of education in Ontario. The report savaged the prevailing system.

At the present time, in most schools many rigidly controlled stipulations must be accepted by everyone who enters their portals. Basically, the schools learning experiences are imposed, involuntary, and structured. The pupil becomes a captive audience from the day of entry. His hours are regulated; his movements in the building and within the classroom are controlled; his right to speak out freely is curtailed. He is subject to countless restrictions about the days to attend, hours to fill, when to talk, where to sit, length of teaching periods, and countless other rules (Living and Learning, 1968, p. 54).

Drawing on the plethora of progressive experiments in the United States and the widespread publicity in Canada of the Plowden report in Britain (Central Council for Advisory Education, 1967), the committee clearly and unequivocally articulated a more liberal direction for Ontario schools. The committee asserted that:

the child should not be treated as an isolated entity, but educated for life in a society which respects his individuality. Where conflict remains the Committee tends to side with the individual and to ask only for social responsibility that is demonstrably right and essential for the good of all (p. 67).

In the Hall-Dennis world, teaching strategies would be more child centred, curriculum less subject-centred. The report proposed organising learning around three themes: communications, humanities and environmental studies. The needs and interests of the pupils rather than the narrow prescriptions of a curriculum would determine their learning. The report challenged just about every structure in existing schools. It opposed corporal punishment and criticised grades and percentages and other reporting procedures. Instead, the report advocated schools which were positive, supportive, non-competitive, and which communicated with pupils and parents in a spirit of openness and mutual support. Failure would disappear it was claimed, as pupils proceeded at their own rates through a curriculum determined by their personal needs and interests.

As one might expect with such a radical departure from tradition, reaction was divided. A university history professor, James Daly (1969), wrote a 79 page critique entitled Education and Molasses. He criticised the committee for their trying to be 'with-

it', their clichéd writing style and above all, their advocating a permissive philosophy that denigrated hard work and competition in the classroom. "The general public", he claimed "would be the eventual victims of what one might regretfully call an assault on civilization as we know it" (Daly, 1969, p.5). Daly was at the time a somewhat lonely voice. Elsewhere criticism was muted, disorganised and inchoate. Even the press was broadly supportive. Hall-Dennis was in vogue.

Within the educational community, the lines of engagement became clear. The report's key author, Lloyd Dennis, a colourful and dynamic former principal, led the progressive forces. He travelled the province spreading the vision of Hall-Dennis. He has been described as "the prime instigator in this shift from a Calvinistic to a Rousseauesque approach in the education of the young" (Stamp, 1982, p. 223). For a brief time, Dennis and the report itself, captured the imaginations of educators and policy makers. The report corresponded to a time in Ontario when alternative schools seemed to emerge almost weekly. A magazine entitled This Magazine is About Schools advocated radical alternatives to traditional schooling. Some schools experienced strikes and other forms of protest as radicalised students protested structural controls on their freedom. To the establishment, particularly (mainly male) principals in Ontario's patriarchal system charged with running schools, challenges to dress codes, discipline procedures and course content were too much. In October 1968, the Headmasters' association influenced the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (O.S.S.T.F.) to publish a 'Letter of Concern Regarding the Secondary Schools of Ontario' in all major newspapers in Ontario. The letter stated:

we believe that the unrest among students in our school is symptomatic of the revolt against all forms of authority within our schools today . . . The attempts of our principals to carry out . . . (their) responsibility in an increasingly permissive society are meeting with resistance. (We need) the cooperation and support of all citizens in our attempts to educate responsible citizens for a democratic society (Quoted in Stamp, 1982, p. 229).

The letter triggered a response which was much different from what the headmasters and the secondary federation had expected. Teachers as individuals and as entire school staffs responded with letters of protest. A significant percentage of teachers had been hired in the 1960s to respond to the post war 'baby boom' which had reached high school in the same decade. These teachers were products of the 1960s and shared many of their students' values and goals. Faced with a massive internal revolt, the Federation quietly retreated from its support of the 'Letter of Concern'. The rhetoric of progressivism swept Ontario virtually unimpeded. The reality was considerably different, however.

In some respects Hall-Dennis merely confirmed existing practices. At the elementary level, open education had been popular for at least six years in Ontario. The open classroom movement in both the United States and Britain had influenced building design and elementary programming. The direct lineage between Ontario's Living and Learning (1968) and the Plowden report (1967) which articulated progressivism in a British context was acknowledged by Hall-Dennis:

In England, the Plowden report on Children and their Primary Schools gives main emphasis to the individual child as the core of the educational programme. Good rapport and easy human relationships between staff and the children are valued. An awareness of current educational thinking on children's educational needs is considered as a basic requisite for the desired dynamic leadership, the quality, range, and depth of learning experiences provided, and the signs of growth and achievement of the children (p. 54).

Economic confidence and political optimism sustained and promoted progressivism in Ontario in the 1960s and early 1970s. Hargreaves (1977) has connected the rise of progressivism to economic expansion and the need for "a new economic man characterised by adaptability and the need for an 'internal supervisor' in those engaged in the shifting relations of dominance and subordinancy in industry" (p. 614).

Conversely, in times of economic decline, the focus usually turns to forces of production and the need for schools to inculcate skills for the future work force; this in turn leads to progressivism being viewed in a "new light and its tensions, along with their consequences, real and alleged, are increasingly exposed to political and public criticism" (p. 642). Ontario was soon to follow this pattern.

To this day, the Hall-Dennis report is at once uplifting, prophetic, and controversial. To progressive educators and others of a more liberal bent it is still seen as a germinal work of educational progressivism in the province. To those with more conservative and pragmatic inclinations, it is viewed as a bewildering series of ill-conceived

recommendations which undermined the strengths of the traditional school system, academic rigour, order, discipline and civility (Crittenden, 1969).

Innerd (1989) contrasts the epistemology proposed by the Hall-Dennis report to Ontario's traditional philosophy:

. . . the alternative epistemology which is process rather than product oriented, which is child, not adult oriented, and is humanistic and developmental (sic), in its orientation. It requires teachers to be less positive, less certain, less dogmatic about what kinds of knowledge are valuable and must be imposed on others. It implies that acquiring knowledge requires personal experience as well as intellect. It requires conditions of learning by which students learn by experience as opposed to verbally, by discovery as opposed to instruction and by guidance rather than by teaching. It is essentially individualistic (p. 45)

To many of today's critics, the alleged decline of Ontario's education system began with 'Hall-Dennis'. The irony, however, is that its popularity was so short lived that much of its approach never impacted teaching and learning, particularly in secondary schools (Hargreaves et al, 1992). This is because Hall-Dennis advocated designing schools to meet pupils' needs whereas most secondary schools in Ontario obliged pupils to conform to their pre-existing structures, and still do.

To this end at the secondary level, Hall-Dennis recommended a diversity of courses, student choice of programmes, concern for racial and ethnic minorities, and more

school based decision-making. It resulted in a document called High School 1 (H.S.1) which introduced an individualised credit system in which pupils must take 27 credits to receive a Secondary School Graduation Diploma (S.S.G.D.) and six additional credits at the grade 13 level to be awarded an Honours Secondary School Graduation Diploma (H.S.S.G.D.). Pupils were required to take very few compulsory subjects. This was quite a contrast to previous requirements. The document left considerable scope for school districts and schools to organise in different ways and to offer a variety of courses to engage pupils in their learning. The shift from tightly structured, narrowly academic, inflexible curricula to progressive, open-ended, totally flexible curricula such as multi-text English programmes resulted in many exciting and imaginative programmes for pupils, as well as some courses that were unchallenging, anti-intellectual, and of questionable rigour and utility, such as some self esteem courses. Even some traditional academic courses such as mathematics were so modified to ensure success for all students that they presented limited challenge for many pupils.

Increasingly however, taxpayers objected to rising costs for education, and secondary teachers and their federation complained that the credit system had produced permissiveness, reduced time for the basics, and created timetabling inflexibility (Crittenden, 1969). The press, university registrars, Chambers of Commerce and other groups and individuals lobbied for a return to greater uniformity in curricula, more academic rigour and external testing (Stamp, 1982). The government, now led by William Davis, had stayed in power for a long time by reading the public's mood accurately. As early as 1970, the government had responded to taxpayers' concerns by

putting a ceiling on the per-pupil spending of school boards. In November of 1973, it tightened the credit system by requiring four compulsory English courses and two Canadian studies courses before a pupil could graduate. In 1976, the government further reduced pupil choices by requiring all grade 9 and 10 pupils to study English, mathematics, science and Canadian history or geography. By the mid 1970s the optimism of the previous decade had come to an end. Stamp (1982) described the Ontario educational scene at mid decade:

The brave new world promised by critics of traditional approaches had not arrived. This utopia had been replaced by the realities of economic recession and unemployment, galloping inflation, and a widespread crisis of confidence. Education was one area where the promises had noticeably failed. Facilities had been expanded to meet the enrolment explosion; suddenly, because of declining birthrates and student disillusion, there were empty places in schools and universities. Teachers' salaries had been raised to competitive levels; now the federations seemed to be acting like militant unions . . . Pedagogical and curricular reforms had been implemented in wholesale quantities; yet students seemed less satisfied than ever . . . The widespread call for a reversion to the seeming security of older norms was inevitable (p. 248).

The South Board to the mid-1970s

In the midst of the reorganisation of education in the late 1960s, the provincial government also arbitrarily changed the governance structure for education in Ontario.

Between 1961 and 1969 it reduced the number of school boards (Local Education Authorities) from over a 1000 to 125. South Board of Education was one of the newly created school Boards which corresponded to the county structure in Ontario. The 10 smaller school Boards (L.E.A.s) which had administered public education in South County were now consolidated into one larger and presumably more cost efficient school board. Each Board was required by legislation to hire a director of education. In South, this set off a contest between the chief executive officers of the two largest municipalities, Elmville and Middleton. Middleton won out and resentments toward it, the new Director Jim Sizemore and his administration, lasted for many years. This animosity was reflected in the activities of the teachers union (Interview, E.S.L.1994). The South district of OSSTF (Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation) was to play an important and adversarial role in the affairs of Lord Byron.

In the directoral competition, Sizemore prepared a short statement of principles of effective school districts for the selection committee. Among his principles were the need to integrate schools from kindergarten to grade 13, the necessity of strong leadership at all levels of the system, the need to involve all stakeholders in major policy decisions, and the imperative of being innovative and anticipating change (Interview, E. S.L. 1994). During his tenure from 1969 to 1975 he worked energetically to implement these principles.

From its inception therefore, South was known as an innovative school system.

Sizemore was something of a benevolent autocrat. He had a very clear conception of educational change and a no-nonsense approach to achieving his goals, but he faced a

formidable task. The ten separate Boards which comprised the new South Board had become one by government fiat. The new governance structure was vigorously opposed by many school trustees, teachers and principals. Sizemore's challenge was to amalgamate many different ways of doing things into one coherent set of policies and procedures. At the same time, he had to work towards some degree of equity in facilities, leadership and programmes for pupils across a large and diverse geographic area.

As a former army officer Sizemore tended to operate from a military stance (Interviews, D. K; J. G. 1996). He created a formidable bureaucracy which included a large cadre of staff people to support schools, principals, and teachers. He moved quickly to establish standards for facilities and to set into motion policies to upgrade buildings which required renovations. Curriculum was initiated at central office and delivered by subject co-ordinators to the schools. Compliance was assured through a number of assistant superintendents (inspectors) who had the job of inspecting principals and teachers. In addition, the Director and the system superintendents (Executive Committee) annually conducted a rigorous 'on site' inspection of each school and its principal. High expectations were established for principals and those who did not measure up were summarily demoted. Needless to say, an Executive Committee visit was an event to survive not to anticipate as a growth experience. Change therefore, was initiated at the Board office, developed into policy by a supportive school board and delivered to the schools by the bureaucracy.

The Director modelled his belief in hard work, innovation, intellectual rigour and

goal achievement (Interview, W.B. 1993). South hired some of the province's best curriculum people and supported them with resources to develop innovative curriculum (Interview W.W. 1995). The results of their efforts not only influenced the schools of the South Board but were also purchased by many school boards across Canada. Sizemore initiated system-led professional development programmes at a time when staff development was episodic in most jurisdictions, if it existed at all. His belief in the importance of leadership resulted in the creation of a leadership programme which continues to the present. A prerequisite to formal leadership in South is completion of the Leadership Course.

Sizemore believed that a school system and its schools should be constantly looking for better ways to educate pupils created an Innovations Committee. With a new secondary school required to accommodate growth in the east end of Middleton, members of the committee were funded to visit innovative schools throughout North America. They visited such American schools as John Adams in Portland Oregon (Doremus, 1981a), Nova School (Doremus, 1981b) and Melbourne school (Doremus, 1981c) in Florida, Wayland School in Massachusetts (Doremus, 1982) and Thornlea (Fullan et al, 1971) near Toronto. The committee included the principal designate of Lord Byron, Ward Bond. He was appointed a year before the scheduled opening to participate in an Innovations Committee and to turn its findings into practice. As a result in September 1970 Lord Byron opened as South's school of the future, the 'lighthouse' school. Sizemore's influence on the Lord Byron concept was described by its first principal:

It has been a long time since Jim departed but you can still remember the things he said, 'Innovation was something that you did instead of, not added on'. Jim Sizemore was the guy who initiated the committee for the purpose of looking into the physical design but it wasn't limited to that. It was really educational design. He constantly encouraged growth and trying and seeing new things. Whenever you saw Jim, you could count on being asked where have you been, who have you been talking to and what have you been reading. It was that attitude that made Lord Byron possible and I didn't see it anywhere else in the province. He was so in control of what he was doing as director that he was able to direct. He didn't have to spend his time 'covering his ass'. He could be a leader in the sense of encouraging growth of people, new ideas, and trying things, more supportive (W.B., 1994).

Lord Byron to the mid-1970s

Lord Byron was built a mile and a half from Roxborough High School. Roxborough was an established and well regarded school in the community. This reputation persists to the present. In 1969, it was the prototypical traditional school of the times. Slow to innovate, sceptical of change, Roxborough has always embraced innovations only when they have been proven elsewhere or the school has been obliged to accede to provincial or Board dictates (Interviews, B.F.; D.K.1996). This strategy has worked well. Its affluent middle to upper middle class community likes it this way (Hargreaves et al, 1992). The contrast of philosophies between the two neighbouring schools created deep divisions between their staffs and has tended to divide contiguous communities.

The boundary line between the two schools Maple Lane, was described as the 'Berlin wall' of Middleton (Interview E.S.L., 1994). The original Berlin wall has proven easier to pull down. When asked how he could support two schools with such dramatically different philosophies the Director responded that " I don't have to believe in either one. What I have to believe is that the staffs in both schools believe in what they are doing" (Interview, E.S.L, 1994.).

Lord Byron' innovations reflected the Hall-Dennis report and many of the ideas current in 1970. Byron was the first semestered school in Ontario. Instead of a pupil following the traditional pattern of eight courses for the entire 10 month school year, Byron's programme required a pupil to take four courses in each of two, five month semesters. Pupils at Lord Byron were required to complete 32 courses to receive a Secondary School Graduation Diploma. Each course was 90 hours. H.S.1 required pupils to complete 27 courses or credits of 110 hours, but the Department of Education allowed experiments. Thornlea (Fullan et al, 1972) and Bayridge Secondary Schools (Fullan and Eastabrook, 1977), schools mentioned in Chapter One are two other examples of schools that experimented with different organisational patterns. The Byron programme enabled students to take a broad programme from a wide diversity of courses. The school day at Byron was divided into six, 60 minute periods. Each pupil was required to be registered in four courses, and therefore had one free period plus a lunch period. Each teacher had a similar timetable, four classes per semester and one free period plus one hour for lunch. The ten Chairmen taught two periods per day and the other four periods were available for the chair to support his department.

This organisation was designed to allow pupils to broaden and deepen their programmes. There was room in a timetable for a pupil with a mathematics-science orientation for example, to pursue an interest in art or music. Pupils were allowed one free period each day. The intention was to provide them with the opportunity to learn to exercise responsibility by managing time. For pupils who had difficulty, extra counsellors were allocated. The free period was certainly the most controversial innovation (Interview, W.W.1995). The semestered organisation also allowed pupils to accelerate their programme to complete high school earlier than in a traditional organisation, or conversely, to repeat courses they may have failed without delaying their opportunity to graduate on time.

The longer period enabled teachers to use a variety of teaching strategies to engage pupils. Since classes were heterogeneous for the most part, the longer period gave secondary teachers the time to use grouping and other inclusive strategies which were common in elementary schools. Since most teachers (myself included) were not experienced in these approaches, considerable staff development was required.

Teachers at Byron were usually required to prepare only two courses on a daily basis compared to three and four in more conventional schools. The Byron teachers, however, spent more time with classes than teachers in others schools. Byron teachers taught eight classes in a year, four per semester, whereas teachers in other schools covered six classes in a year. 48 Byron classes could be covered by six teachers compared to eight teachers at a school like Roxborough. This realised a savings in teacher allocation at Byron. In other words, whereas a school of 1000 might require

60 teachers, Byron could cover all of its classes with 15 fewer teachers. Some of this saving was allocated for extra counsellors or to provide time for chairpersons. If, for example, the saving in teacher allocation was the equivalent of nine teachers, the average salary of six not allocated was given to the school to support its programme. If the average teacher salary was \$30,000 then Lord Byron would receive \$180,000 (6 x \$30,000). This money was used to hire extra secretaries so that teachers had considerable secretarial support. Teacher assistants assisted teachers in classrooms. Lab assistants set up experiments in chemistry; artists worked with pupils in class; professional musicians supported music classes and audio visual specialists made sure equipment was available and ready when required. While the work load was heavier for teachers, there was considerable support available.

Byron's departments were organised into cross disciplinary units such as Social Sciences, the Arts, Mathematics Science and Technology, with a department chair in charge as opposed to a department head. The number of formal leaders was therefore reduced from as many as 22 in some schools to ten. The major role of the chairman was to support the classroom teachers. Each chairman handled discipline and attendance issues within the department so that teachers had immediate assistance if necessary. In the first four years, because of the chairs, the vice principal at Byron spent very little time on discipline and could direct his efforts to issues such as community relations (Interview G. C. 1994). More importantly, with so many new courses, the chairmen had to be effective curriculum writers. If teachers had materials to develop or curriculum to write, the chairman would also assume some of their teaching responsibilities. All departmental administrative tasks were dealt with by the

chairmen who also had a secretary to ensure that they were not consumed by administrative tasks. They also formed the principals' cabinet to work out school policies and procedures and make sure that teachers were informed and had input on school issues. Guided by Bond, the chairmen (they were all men until 1974) worked out policy and procedures, but the actual approval was a staff decision.

Teachers designed integrated curriculum units and course packages, employed alternative teaching strategies such as simulations, group activities, independent study, and outdoor education. Programmes were developed to meet the diversity of student needs. Some departments such as Social Sciences developed a number of courses which were designed to allow pupils to pursue their interests. They promoted cross-disciplinary studies such as environmental studies in co-operation with the Science department, African studies with the Arts department and American studies with English and Arts departments. The English curriculum, for example, handled heterogeneous classes and individualised pupils' programmes through the use of themes. For instance, one pupil's programme in the mystery unit for grade 11 might consist of James Bond books while another pupil read Dostoyevsky. The imaginative chairman of the English department Wesley Walters, who later became Principal of Lord Byron, described his programme as "putting the right book in the hands of the right kid at the right time" (Interview, W. W. 1995). The physical education programme emphasised activities which would carryover to adult life such as tennis, racquet ball, golf, sailing, horse-back riding, among others. School teams accepted every one who wished to play. Remarkably, they proved quite competitive with other

schools. In the second year of the school, Lord Byron's basketball team challenged Roxborough for the Middleton championship.

Traditional competitive and elitist rituals and ceremonies were generally down-played or even eliminated. Graduation ceremonies which in some schools rivalled university convocations, at Byron became informal gatherings of graduates, relatives and friends. Pep rallies to urge on sports teams did not exist. Lord Byron did not participate in the regional elite mathematics contest. Parents' nights were much more informal than in other schools and teachers more accessible to parents. Professional activities were opened to interested community members and a parents' advisory council was initiated.

The building was designed to be as flexible as possible. It had open architecture, few doors, air conditioning for year-round use, and the system's first main-frame computer. Every teacher had work-space in a work room separate from classrooms. The library (called and considered a resource centre) was the centre and hub of the school. Rooms were organised to facilitate interdisciplinary work. The music, theatre arts and the stage of the cafetorium for example, were in the same section of the school. Lockers were designed into a central hallway 'crush area' which meant that pupils' use of their lockers was not disruptive to classes. To the outsider, the lack of walls was the most obvious physical example of change. While many 'open concept' elementary schools had been built in the province, there were no open plan secondary schools in South. Open education had evolved at the elementary level in the early 1960s but few secondary teachers, including those hired to Lord Byron, had ever worked in an open environment. This was a formidable challenge which was not entirely overcome

because some teachers who continued to teach in traditional didactic fashion merely talked louder. Some others who tried to adapt by using groups, on occasion, lost control of the class and some pupils did very little in a class. When an addition was planned for 1975, teachers asked for the inclusion of some strategically placed walls.

When asked about Byron's uniqueness, the Assistant Director at the time of Lord Byron's opening stated:

I think a combination of the marrying of a philosophy that was personified in the first principal who set about to hire a staff who would support the philosophy and who were involved in the design of the building to fit the philosophy. Unlike most other schools where the building is struck and then something is put into it, here the philosophy and the outlines of the organisation and so on were designed first. Then the leadership was established and the staff hired. This was unique. I would think its emphasis in the early 70s on integration of subject matter and individualisation probably put it up there among distinctive schools. Whether it puts it up there as a unique school I am not sure. Byron was born in the days of generous funding, the Hall-Dennis report and some emphasis from the Board on innovation (Interview, E.S.L. 1994).

The staff which was hired was young. The average age was less than 30. It included a mixture of experiences and backgrounds and ethnic groups. The staff included two Black teachers, one Oriental and one East Indian. The school community was almost entirely White. It also included a number of people considered by other schools to be

controversial. Some of these teachers had been considered too progressive, or too friendly with pupils, or just too confrontational with administration in their previous environments. As a senior administrator stated “Ward Bond was the father of Lord Byron and he nurtured it in the years he was there. He knew what it was about and he had the skill and I would even say in those early years, the craftiness to hire appropriate people” (Interview, E.S.L.1994).

Over one third of the staff was female which was a higher percentage than most secondary schools. Ironically, consistent with the patriarchal leadership values of the time, the original department chairs were all males. The role of a department chairman was unique in the province and from the principal’s point of view, the key to making the concept of a ‘humane school’ work. As he stated, when interviewed:

The principal makes it possible or enables the chairman to administer their duties. The chairman enables the teacher to teach, removes their problems, and the teacher is to be there for the students, enabling the student and the teacher to work. Remember the expectation that if teachers were having discipline problems that interfered with the student learning, the chairman dealt with it. They didn’t go all the way to the office (Interview, W.B. 1994).

I was hired as the Chairman of Social Sciences. My appointment reflected the leadership and risk-taking qualities of the Director and Byron’s first principal. I actually signed on in October of 1969. At the time a conflict was developing between the teachers and trustees at a provincial level. Most Boards had informally agreed to a hiring freeze. This

escalated to the point that the Ontario Trustees' Council initiated a formal moratorium on teacher hiring. As I found out many years later, the chairman of the council accused South of breaking the 'freeze' by hiring me from a neighbouring board. Sizemore asked two questions: "Is this guy we hired any good?" and "When did he sign?" When he was assured of my credentials and that I had indeed signed before the official hiring moratorium, he confronted the Council, indicated that they were ill informed and received the support of his Board against the provincial body. Knowing of the impending hiring difficulty, the Byron Principal had risked censure to get what he believed to be quality, and the Director risked provincial rebuke by backing his principal. It was into this environment that I became a South employee and a staff member at Lord Byron.

Personal history to the mid-1970s.

After graduation from university and before my first teaching job, I completed a ten week teacher preparation programme at the Ontario College of Education. I was one of many 'ten week wonders' who flooded into the teaching profession at a time of a severe teacher shortage. The next summer I completed a five week programme and the following June wrote an examination to be categorised as a specialist in the teaching of history. In retrospect, my entry to teaching speaks eloquently to the government's impoverished view of teacher training and teaching as a profession at that time.

In 1969, I was in my tenth year as a secondary teacher. My experience to that point had been one year in a rural secondary school and nine years in a suburban secondary school. In the rural school, as the youngest person on staff, I not only taught every history course

plus one English course but coached or assisted with every boys sports team as well as advising on girls teams. I supervised every dance and helped with student government. Caldwell High School was a district high school, which served a small town of Caldwell, the surrounding rural area, and a reserve for the Six Nations Indians. I taught the prescribed curriculum, using the prescribed textbooks using the prescribed methodology. My commitment to the job, in my first year, was considerable and the need for flexibility was a daily necessity. There was little time for reflection, preparation or contemplation. Like most 'ten week wonders', I merely tried to survive. Many of my fellow summer school colleagues left the profession prematurely. Every 33 minutes I moved to the next class. It was the principal's idea that teachers should move and pupils stay in one room to prevent disturbances in the hallways. As a young and healthy 22 year old the routine was easy for me, but for some older teachers, one of whom was partially lame, it was a gruelling ordeal. In a 45 period week, I had three free periods which were usually spent covering girls' physical education because their teacher was often absent.

As a history specialist, with a good background from a well regarded university, I was able to augment the textbook with materials and books from my own studies. I taught pupils to interpret the information and to challenge textbook 'truths'. In retrospect, I suspect much of the content that I taught must have been somewhat irrelevant for most pupils, and quite inappropriate for native pupils. Textbooks and the department's curriculum outlines on Canadian history almost ignored the rich contribution of aboriginal people and particularly the Six Nation Indians to Canadian history. The Anglican Indians tended to conform to school procedures and the 'white' curriculum, whereas the 'Longhouse' or traditional Indians merely sat in class, if they showed up at

all. Teachers coped by ignoring these youngsters, and certainly the community treated them as second class citizens. While I went out of my way to recruit native pupils for sports teams with some success, I still have a sense of guilt regarding my inability to meet their learning needs. In reviewing my career, I can trace my advocacy for marginalised pupils to this first year with native pupils.

After a year, I moved to a suburban school, Harwood High School, in a community closer to the university where I had undertaken post graduate studies in history. As a middle to upper middle class school, it was rather typical of the times. It emphasised university as the only worthy goal of education. In the vernacular of the times, a teacher's task was to 'pass the best, and fail the rest'. Fortunately, the times were good in Ontario and semi-skilled labour was required in manufacturing. Many of 'the rest' therefore went on to lead very comfortable, well-paid, 'blue collar' lives. The school was characterised by grades, rigorous tracking, specialised teachers, and examinations three times a year. It was a classic example of what Hargreaves (1994) has called a 'balkanized' culture. Each department at Harwood had its own culture, some more collaborative than others. There was very little if any collaboration on school-wide projects. The only joint discussions about pupils occurred at the end of the year promotion meetings. Teachers assigned projects, homework and tests in ignorance of what their colleagues in other subjects were doing. It was the pupil who had to bring some coherence to the school programme because the school did not recognise cohesion of curriculum as an issue (Beane, 1995).

Within a year I was promoted to be the Head of the History Department. My job as the Head of History as I saw it, was to attract more students to senior history courses in order to get more sections and therefore more teachers. Larger departments had more power and prestige in the school. Most decisions were made by the principal, a few by the department heads (Ball, 1981; Hargreaves, 1992; Siskin, 1994). Shared decision-making was considered a leadership weakness. For the most part, principals and vice principals were managers and administrators, and in secondary schools they left any educational decisions to department heads.

Secondary schools were led by principals who had to be approved by the Department of Education and for the most part followed what Busher and Saran (1994) would call structural-functional leadership. This is the traditional-rational model which emphasises roles, role differentiation and hierarchies. In this patriarchal structure, male leaders managed the school, enforced rules and stayed out of curriculum and teaching decisions. The two principals I worked for in the 1960s would perceive themselves as guardians of tradition and the status quo. My relationship with the first principal of Harwood was guarded to say the least. He admired my scholarship and teaching but did not appreciate my questioning of school procedures and particularly what I considered his rather arbitrary approach to pupil discipline. Fortunately, I taught many of the children of school board members, which as I discovered later, had led to my appointment as head over my principal's protestations. At this point in my career, administration held absolutely no appeal. For most of my first eleven years, my personal ambitions focused on becoming an academic historian and perhaps a university professor, certainly not an educational manager.

The school's timetable was composed of eight, 40 minute periods. Each student took seven or eight courses. Most courses were compulsory to the end of grade 12. To be promoted to the next grade a student had to receive 50 per cent in each subject. Pupils who failed one subject had to get 55 per cent overall average and students who failed two had to achieve 60 per cent overall average. If this average was satisfactory, pupils who failed a subject merely continued the failed subject at the next level. It was not unknown for pupils to fail four years in a row but continue in the subject. No effort was given to remediation. Simply stated, the school created a structure in which the pupil had to conform or drop out. Pupils who had difficulty in school, were assigned to the two year 'Occupations' class. Half of their programme was academic and half was related to trades training. Their academic programme was a modified version of the regular programme and usually quite inappropriate for pupils who had already experienced academic failure. The trades programme kept the pupils occupied until school-leaving age. They received a school leaving certificate but no credit towards an apprenticeship.

For regular academic pupils the culmination was grade 13. Until 1966, the 'departmentals' were 100 per cent of a pupil's grade. As a grade 13 pupil in the 1950s, I tended to do very little all year and crammed enough in the two weeks examination period to earn university entrance. This was not an uncommon pattern. It is interesting that since they were cancelled many people nostalgically yearn for the 'good old days' of the 'departmentals' as though they brought rigour to school (Daly, 1969; Ministry of Education, 1977). While they may not have created a climate for learning,

they did dictate content, teaching style, and assessment strategies to all grades and all tracks. Ironically, while all pupils felt the influence of the 'departmentals', fewer than twenty percent of the pupils who began secondary school completed grade 13 (Stamp. 1982).

A reputation as an excellent teacher depended on one's pupils' performance on the 'departmentals'. Since only 'academic' teachers could teach grade 13, the opportunity to establish a reputation was limited. Simply stated there were two classes of teachers, with different status and promotion opportunities. At commencements, it was the practice of the chair of the Harwood High School Board to outline the passing percentage of each grade 13 teacher to the parent audience. This led to questionable teacher practices. Many teachers actively discouraged pupils from taking their subject so that only pupils who would pass the 'departmentals' wrote the exam. If the pupil persisted, some teachers made the experience so difficult that weaker pupils dropped the course before the exam. One teacher whom I taught with, told the pupils that his examinations were worth 100 marks when indeed the best that anyone could achieve was 75 marks. Anyone with 50 marks (actually 66 per cent) or less was vigorously discouraged from continuing. This practice continued for some time until a parent called the practice to the principal's attention. Interestingly, the teacher was not disciplined and went on to become a principal. My own practice was to find out who was setting the departmental examination and study the examiner's writings to determine interests. In addition, I reviewed previous examinations to see if there were patterns. From these two sets of information I would 'spot' the exam with a fair

degree of success. As a result pupils who probably did not deserve to pass, did. Test pollution is not a modern phenomena (Smith, 1991).

The school was designed to replicate the successful factory model which propelled developed economies in the 1960s. As Wise (1979) states:

policy-making process has an affinity for the rationalistic conception of teaching and the teacher. The reasons are simple: The will of the policy maker must be implemented; the expectations for what the schools are to accomplish must be translated into action; the workers (teachers) in the factory (school) must perform their assigned tasks and the bureaucracy must be peopled by bureaucrats who will implement the official goals of the institution (p. 94).

Curriculum, which was little more than a list of content to be covered, was determined, delivered and inspected by inspectors from the Department of Education who toured the province. Only authorised textbooks which appeared on the Department's Circular 14, could be used. In my field of history, the texts contained essentially the same content. As I was to find out personally (Fink, 1970), to get authorisation and therefore sales, a text must be inoffensive to important segments of society. Curriculum therefore varied very little from school to school, or class to class. Textbooks tended to dictate the course content and approach. Teachers were considered semi-skilled workers whose job was to implement the Department's 'blueprint'.

In my first ten years of teaching in the suburban school, I often felt that I was living the title of Postman and Weingartner's best seller Teaching as A Subversive Activity (1969). As a student, I had attended a huge secondary school of over 2600 pupils and had felt very small and insignificant. School was a hurdle to overcome, not an experience to be savoured. My parents, particularly my father, emphasised my need to get an education. Both parents were pulled out of school at the first opportunity to help support their families. My father, who worked in a semi-skilled job in a large steel plant, always felt cheated of his chance to accomplish more in life and instilled in me the necessity of getting an education. My roots as the child of working-class parents as well as my dissatisfaction with my own secondary education contributed to a sense of unease with the traditional structures of schools. I took considerable delight in helping my pupils to 'beat' the system just as I had as a secondary school pupil.

The 1960s had produced a plethora of radical educational literature. Writers as diverse as Friedenberg (1959), Goodman (1964), Holt (1969), and Silberman (1970), among many others challenged the traditional educational paradigm. Coleman and his colleagues (1966) had argued that the socio-economic level of parents determined students' success and that schools made very little difference. I read much of this literature, somewhat uncritically and with considerable pleasure because it reinforced my somewhat ill-defined discontent with a model of schooling that was essentially elitist and undemocratic.

When the Hall-Dennis report was published, I saw it as an opportunity to influence the course of education, at least in a small way. I arranged for Lloyd Dennis to speak at

the local university, précised the report for colleagues and participated in a panel for parents of the school. I recall passionately espousing the progressivism of Hall-Dennis. My principal who was also on the panel, spoke equally passionately against it. This was not the first time we were at odds over philosophy. When the Federation's 'Letter of Concern on the Secondary Schools of Ontario' appeared in newspapers in October 1968, I wrote a rebuttal in which I presented the more liberal view that schools should be designed to meet the individual needs of pupils not to make the lives of headmasters more comfortable. Every teacher on staff, including the two vice principals, added their signatures to mine before it was sent to the Federation head office. As stated previously, the federation received such a backlash from its members that it let the matter drop. What I found out later was that the principal of Harwood High School had been one of the authors of the 'Letter of Concern'.

With the advent of county school boards in 1969, Harwood became part of the Northwest Board of Education and my principal moved on to another Board to be replaced by one of his vice principals. 1969 was also a year of decision for me. I was a department head in a school in which I had been personally successful and was now well supported by the new principal. As a teacher with an academic background, teaching in an affluent area, the first ten years of my career had been for the most part enjoyable, but as time passed had become somewhat routine. I had become well known provincially in my subject field; I had taught specialist courses for history teachers at the University of Western Ontario and had taken an active role in the teachers' federation. I could continue in my comfortable situation for the next 25 years, or find something more challenging and professionally enriching. This personal

professional dilemma resulted in my searching for 'something else' in education. Lord Byron became for me 'the something else' and in many ways a turning point in my professional career.

Ward Bond, who knew of my work from mutual friends in the South Board, approached me to join the Byron staff in early 1970. His description of what he had in mind for Lord Byron intrigued and excited me. I knew I was in a 'rut' professionally at Harwood; I also felt that the choice of senior leaders in the Northwest Board did not bode well for someone of my more liberal educational views. I had at the same time been tentatively offered a job at a faculty of education at a leading University. For a teacher in Ontario in 1970, to work in a faculty of education was considered the professional 'promised land'. The offer was conditional on the faculty's receiving the funds for the additional job. The University delayed and delayed. In the meantime the principal designate of Byron required a decision. I made the quick decision to go with the definite offer rather than a conditional one. While hardly a reasoned judgement, my intuition paid off. The University job was finally approved but disappeared five years later when enrolment dropped at the faculty. I joined the first Lord Byron staff in 1970 at a time when the opportunity to innovate was only limited by a person's imagination.

The next three years were a blur of teaching, programme writing, travel and presentations on the 'Byron concept'. Few periods of my 35 year career as an educator were as energising, arduous and eventful. I revered Ward Bond. I tried to pattern my own leadership after him, and to this day his is my image of the 'invitational leader' (Fink, 1992a; Stoll and Fink, 1996). I was part of that 'critical

mass' of leaders and innovators in the school. I believed in the Byron concept and still do, and worked diligently to support it both intellectually and publicly. Wesley Walters, the chairman of English, Graham Clark, the vice principal and I became close confidantes of Bond. We were included when presentations were to be made, and consulted whenever Bond needed quick advice. I have always prided myself on my work ethic but the demands of Byron challenged even my capacity to work long and often draining hours. The weight of writing new programmes, supporting teachers, ordering materials, monitoring a substantial budget, maintaining ties to central office, to the feeder schools, to the Ministry, to the community were wearing. I was certainly not alone in commitment to the school, and the principal led by example. Fortunately most of us were fairly young and we considered the challenge to be worth the effort. My life at this stage was made up of work and my family, and in retrospect my family got little of my time. I resigned from associations, community groups and recreational activities because I did not have the time or the energy to do it all. My social life tended to orbit around Byron activities and its staff. As I look back, my life lacked balance, but I did not see it at the time because I had finally arrived in a situation which was congruent with my values and beliefs about education and the treatment of people. I was totally, almost obsessively, involved.

In addition to my teaching and departmental responsibilities, I virtually single-handedly created the 'bearpit' which was a speaker series for pupils during their free periods. The idea was to provide an informal learning situation for pupils during their free period. Each week was a theme and I invited in guests to interact with pupils. One week, for instance was comparative religions week. In addition to ministers, rabbis and priests, I

arranged for the Hari Krishna to come. Their incense and chants created quite a distraction throughout the school. I sustained this programme as part of my commitment to the school for two years and built it to the point that a full-time person was hired in the third year of the school to continue the programme. My second major initiative was to build better relationships with our elementary feeder schools. I arranged for classes in the high school to be twinned with elementary classes. Byron pupils in science for example helped elementary teachers conduct stream studies. Byron pupils in grade ten wrote children's stories as part of their English programme and read them to a grade two partner and the grade two pupil wrote and read stories to the older pupils. This is an activity which continues to the present.

To help me to understand the elementary experience and to break down some barriers, I arranged to teach grade two for a semester and for an elementary teacher to teach courses at the high school. While a few other exchanges had occurred before in the district, none had seen a high school teacher teach young children. The challenge of teaching seven year olds gave me a healthy respect for elementary teachers and proved useful in subsequent years. At the time, Byron was the only secondary school that regularly interacted with its feeder schools. Generally the high school attitude was one of either avoidance or disdain. Bond encouraged this type of activity as a way to influence Byron's elementary feeder schools to become more progressive. Both of Byron's feeder schools were very traditional and one might even have been described as repressive. Pupils who entered in grade nine found the adjustment to the more pupil-oriented Lord Byron a difficult transition.

My third major involvement at Byron was to organise the professional development programme for the school. Over the three years, I arranged for many of the leading educational thinkers of the time to conduct workshops or make presentations for the school. We would often invite a speaker and then invite others in the system or province to the workshop and charge them a fee. We became rather good at not only providing professional development at no cost to the school but also at turning a profit. The South Board's continuing ability to conduct conferences and workshops and make a profit can be traced to the programmes at Byron in the early 1970s.

We were so engaged in our work and various projects that we paid little attention to the district as a whole. Other professionals criticised Byron without ever knowing what was going on. Bond tried to explain to his fellow principals but he eventually gave up because "they weren't bothering to listen" (Interview W.B., 1994). Removed from those early years by 25 years, however, I can recognise my own naiveté and even arrogance in advocating for Byron. Like Bond and Walters, and Clark to a limited extent, I failed to realise how threatening we must have been to our educational colleagues. We worked hard to gain community support and ostensibly succeeded by force of personality and argument. We used the press to get our story across, but our success in gaining profile did not help relationships with other schools and the teachers' federation. In retrospect we did not realise how the times contributed to our freedom and how much the patronage of Sizemore meant to the climate of innovation in which we revelled.

After three years as the Chairman of Social Sciences, I left Byron to become a vice principal. People still say the only time they have ever seen me lose control was

during my farewell talk to the staff in 1973. Leaving Byron was like leaving home and the emotional ties were very hard to break. For me, and I suspect most of my colleagues, the early years at Byron were the 'best of times'. I was the first of the 'critical mass' to leave. Bond, Walters and Clark left the following year. After a year as a vice principal in a middle school (grades 6, 7, and 8), which I enjoyed very much, I was reassigned to Lord Byron as a vice principal. I was told by senior administration that I was needed at Byron to maintain the direction of the earlier initiatives. I returned however, to a very different Byron in the 1974-75 school year. The forces of change which had been dominant in the first few years of the school's history were about to confront the constraints of continuity.

Conclusion

Byron was intended to be a radical departure from existing secondary schools in Ontario and the South Board. Its birth and early years closely followed patterns described in Chapter One for other new and innovative schools (Fullan et al, 1972; Fullan and Eastabrook, 1977; Watts, 1977; Gold and Miles, 1981; Fletcher et al, 1985; Smith et al, 1987) . A progressive climate in education in the province enabled an innovative C.E.O. of a school district to establish a committee to design a 'state of the art' school. The system appointed a charismatic and dynamic person as the school's first principal. He, in turn, carefully selected a staff which could effect the innovative vision he held for the school. They developed policies, practices and teaching approaches which were intended to be pupil centred, democratic, experimental and open to community involvement and scrutiny. The 'critical mass' of highly motivated staff members worked diligently to

design and deliver innovative curricula, establish alternative programmes, and, in general, get the school operating smoothly. This industry was accompanied by the exhilaration of receiving a great deal of positive publicity and hosting thousands of visitors from across Canada and from other countries. Meanwhile there were muted rumblings of discontent from colleagues in other schools who saw implications for their own practices, and members of the community, who were concerned about the appropriateness of the new school for their child and for pupils in general. These discordant voices reflected the general provincial retreat from the quite provocative, and in some ways revolutionary recommendations of the Royal Commission Report, Living and Learning. On the surface, Byron's early history paralleled experiences elsewhere. There were, however, significant features of Byron which were unique. In the next chapter I use the conceptual scheme introduced in Chapter Three to analyse this period of 'creation and experimentation' to show the connections and relationships which tie Byron to other similar schools but which also make Lord Byron High School singular.